The Gulistan of Sa'di

By Sa'di

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Introductory

In the Name of Allah the Merciful the Clement

Laudation to the God of majesty and glory! Obedience to him is a cause of approach and gratitude in increase of benefits. Every inhalation of the breath prolongs life and every expiration of it gladdens our nature; wherefore every breath confers two benefits and for every benefit gratitude is due.

Whose hand and tongue is capable
To fulfil the obligations of thanks to him?

Words of the most high: Be thankful, O family of David, and but few of my servants are thankful.

It is best to a worshipper for his transgressions
To offer apologies at the throne of God,
Although what is worthy of his dignity
No one is able to accomplish.

The showers of his boundless mercy have penetrated to every spot, and the banquet of his unstinted liberality is spread out everywhere. He tears not the veil of reputation of his worshippers even for grievous sins, and does not withhold their daily allowance of bread for great crimes.

O bountiful One, who from thy invisible treasury
Suppliest the Guebre and the Christian with food,
How could'st thou disappoint thy friends,
Whilst having regard for thy enemies?

He told the chamberlain of the morning breeze to spread out the emerald carpet and, having commanded the nurse of vernal clouds to cherish the daughters of plants in the cradle of the earth, the trees donned the new year's robe and clothed their breast with the garment of green foliage, whilst their offspring, the branches, adorned their heads with blossoms at the approach of the season of the roses. Also the juice of the cane became delicious honey by his power, and the date a lofty tree by his care.

Cloud and wind, moon and sun move in the sky
That thou mayest gain bread, and not eat it unconcerned.
For thee all are revolving and obedient.

It is against the requirements of justice if thou obeyest not.

There is a tradition of the prince of created beings, the paragon of existing things, the mercy to the inhabitants of the world, the purest of mankind and the completion of the revolving ages, Muhammad the elect, upon whom be blessing and peace:

Intercessor, obeyed, prophet, gracious,
Bountiful, majestic, affable, marked with the seal of God.

What danger is there to the wall of the faithful with thee for a buttress?
What fear of the waves of the sea has he whose pilot is Noah?

He attained exaltation by his perfection.
He disspelled darkness by his beauty.
Beauteous are all his qualities,
Benediction be on him and on his family.

The tradition is that whenever a sinful and distressed worshipper stretches forth the hand of repentance with hopes of acceptance to the court of heaven, God the most high does not notice him, whereon he continues to implore mercy with supplications and tears and God the most holy says: O my angels, verily I am ashamed of my servant and he has no other lord besides myself. Accordingly I have fully pardoned him.

See the generosity and kindness of God.
The servant has committed sin and he is ashamed.

Those who attend permanently at the temple of his glory confess the imperfection of their worship and say: We have not worshipped thee according to the requirements of thy worship; and those who describe the splendour of his beauty are rapt in amazement saying: We have not known thee as thou oughtest to be known.

If someone asks me for his description,
What shall I despairing say of One who has no form?
The lovers have been slain by the beloved.
No voice can come from the slain.

One of the devout who had deeply plunged his head into the cowl of meditation and had been immersed in the ocean of visions, was asked, when he had come out of that state, by one of his companions who had desired to cheer him up: 'What beautiful gift hast thou brought us from the garden in which thou hast been?' He replied: 'I intended to fill the skirts of my robe with roses, when I reached the rose-tree, as presents for my friends but the perfume of the flowers intoxicated me so much that I let, go the hold of my skirts.'

O bird of the morning, learn love from the moth
Because it burnt, lost its life, and found no voice.
These pretenders are ignorantly in search of Him,
Because he who obtained knowledge has not returned.

O thou who art above all imaginations, conjectures, opinions and ideas,
Above anything people have said or we have heard or read,
The assembly is finished and life has reached its term
And we have, as at first, remained powerless in describing thee.

Panegyric of the Padshah of Islam
may Allah perpetuate his reign

The good reputation of Sa'di which is current among the people, the renown of his eloquence which has spread on the surface of the earth, the products of his friendly pen which are consumed like sugar, and the scraps of his literary compositions which are hawked about like bills of exchange, cannot be ascribed to his virtue and perfection, but the lord of the world, the axis of the revolving circle of time, the vice-gerent of Solomon, protector of the followers of the religion, His Majesty the Shahanshah Atabek Aa'zm Muzaffaruddin Abu Bekr Ben Sa'd Ben Zanki-The shadow of Allah on earth! O Lord, be pleased with him and with his kingdom-has looked upon Sa'di with a favourable eye, has praised him greatly, and has shown him sincere affection so that all men, gentle and simple, love him because the people follow the religion of their king.

Because thou lookest upon my humble person,
My merits are more celebrated than those of the sun.
Although this slave may possess all faults,
Every fault pleasing the Sultan becomes a virtue.

A sweet-smelling piece of clay, one day in the bath,
Came from the hand of a beloved one to my hand.
I asked: 'Art thou musk or ambergris?
Because thy delicious odour intoxicates me.'
It replied: 'I was a despicable lump of day;
But for a while in the society of a rose.
The perfection of my companion took effect on me
And, if not, I am the same earth which I am.'

O Allah, favour the Musalmans with the prolongation of his life, and with an augmentation of his reward for his good qualities and deeds; exalt the dignities of his friends and governors; annihilate those who are inimical to him and wish him ill; for the sake of what is recorded in the verses of the Quran. O Allah, give security protect his son.

Verily the world is happy through him; may his happiness endure for ever
And may the Lord strengthen him and with the banners of victory.
Thus the branch will flourish of which he is the root
Because the beauty of the earth's plants depends on the virtue of the seed.

May God, whose name be exalted and hallowed, keep in security and peace the pure country of Shiraz until the time of the resurrection, under the authority of righteous governors and by the exertions of practical scholars.

Knowest thou not why I in foreign countries
Roamed about for a long time?

I went away from the distress of the Turks because I saw
The world entangled like the hair of negroes;
They were all human beings, but
Like wolves sharp-clawed, for shedding blood.
When I returned I saw the country at rest,
The tigers having abandoned the nature of tigers.
Within a man of good disposition like an angel,
Without an army like bellicose lions.
Thus it happened that first I beheld
The world full of confusion, anxiety and distress;
Then it became as it is in the days of the just Sultan
Atabek Abu Bekr Ben Sa'd Zanki.

The country of Pares dreads not the vicissitudes of time,
As long as one presides over it like thee, the shadow of God.
Today no one can point out on the surface of the earth,
A place like the threshold of thy door, the asylum of comfort.
On thee is incumbent the protection of the distressed and gratitude
Upon us and reward on God the creator of the world,
As long as the world and wind endure.

The Cause for Composing the Gulistan

I was one night meditating on the time which had elapsed, repenting of the life I had squandered and perforating the stony mansion of my heart with adamantine tears. 1 I uttered the following verses in conformity with the state of mind:

Every moment a breath of life is spent,
If I consider, not much of it remains.
O thou, whose fifty years have elapsed in sleep,
Wilt thou perhaps overtake them in these five days?
Shame on him who has gone and done no work.
The drum of departure was beaten but he has not made his load.

Sweet sleep on the morning of departure
Retains the pedestrian from the road.
Whoever had come had built a new edifice.
He departed and left the place to another
And that other one concocted the same futile schemes
And this edifice was not completed by anyone.
Cherish not an inconstant friend.
Such a traitor is not fit for amity.
As all the good and bad must surely die,
He is happy who carries off the ball of virtue.
Send provision for thy journey to thy tomb.
Nobody will bring it after thee; send it before.
Life is snow, the sun is melting hot.
Little remains, but the gentleman is slothful still.

O thou who hast gone empty handed to the bazar,
I fear thou wilt not bring a towel filled.
Who eats the corn he has sown while it is yet green,
Must at harvest time glean the ears of it.
Listen with all thy heart to the advice of Sa'di.
Such is the way; be a man and travel on.

The capital of man's life is his abdomen.
If it be gradually emptied there is no fear
But if it be so closed as not to open
The heart may well despair of life;
And if it be open so that it cannot be closed,
Go and wash thy hands of this world's life.
Four contending rebellious dispositions
Harmonize but five days with each other.
If one of these four becomes prevalent,
Sweet life must abandon the body
Wherefore an intelligent and perfect man
Sets not his heart upon this world's life.

After maturely considering these sentiments, I thought proper to sit down in the mansion of retirement to fold up the skirts of association, to wash my tablets of heedless sayings and no more to indulge in senseless prattle:

To sit in a corner, like one with a cut tongue, deaf and dumb,
Is better than a man who has no command over his tongue.

I continued in this resolution till a friend, who had been my companion in the camel-litter of misery and my comrade in the closet of affection, entered at the door, according to his old custom with playful gladness, and spread out the surface of desire; but I would give him no reply nor lift up my head from the knees of worship. He looked at me aggrieved and said:

'Now, while thou hast the power of utterance,
Speak, O brother, with grace and kindness
Because tomorrow, when the messenger of death arrives,
Thou wilt of necessity restrain thy tongue.'

One of my connections informed him how matters stood and told him that I had firmly determined and was intent upon spending the rest of my life in continual devotion and silence, advising him at the same time, in case he should be able, to follow my example and to keep me company. He replied: 'I swear by the great dignity of Allah and by our old friendship that I shall not draw breath, nor budge one step, unless he converses with me as formerly, and in his usual way; because it is foolish to insult friends and easy to expiate an oath. It is against propriety, and contrary to the opinions of wise men that the Zulfiqar of A'li should remain in the scabbard and the tongue of Sa'di in his palate.'

O intelligent man what is the tongue in the mouth?
It is the key to the treasure-door of a virtuous man.
When the door is closed how can one know

Whether he is a seller of jewels or a hawker?

Although intelligent men consider silence civil,
It is better for thee to speak at the proper time.
Two things betoken levity of intellect: to remain mute
When it is proper to speak and to talk when silence is required.

In short, I had not the firmness to restrain my tongue from speaking to him, and did not consider it polite to turn away my face from his conversation, he being a congenial friend and sincerely affectionate.

When thou fightest with anyone, consider
Whether thou wilt have to flee from him or he from thee.

I was under the necessity of speaking and then went out by way of diversion in the vernal season, when the traces of severe cold had disappeared and the time of the dominion of roses had arrived:

Green garments were upon the trees
Like holiday robes on contented persons.
On the first of the month Ardibihesht Jellali
The bulbuls were singing on the pulpits of branches.
Upon the roses pearls of dew had fallen,
Resembling perspiration on an angry sweetheart's cheek.

I happened to spend the night in a garden with one of my friends and we found it to be a pleasant cheerful place with heart-ravishing entangled trees; its ground seemed to be paved with small glass beads whilst, from its vines, bunches like the Pleiads were suspended.

A garden the water of whose river was limpid
A grove the melody of whose birds was harmonious.

The former full of bright-coloured tulips,
The latter full of fruits of various kinds;
The wind had in the shade of its trees
Spread out a bed of all kinds of flowers.

The next morning when the intention of returning had prevailed over the opinion of tarrying, I saw that my friend had in his skirt collected roses, sweet basil, hyacinths and fragrant herbs with the determination to carry them to town; whereon I said: 'Thou knowest that the roses of the garden are perishable and the season passes away', and philosophers have said: 'Whatever is not of long duration is not to be cherished.' He asked: 'Then what is to be done?' I replied: 'I may compose for the amusement of those who look and for the instruction of those who are present a book of a Rose Garden, a Gulistan, whose leaves cannot be touched by the tyranny of autumnal blasts and the delight of whose spring the vicissitudes of time will be unable to change into the inconstancy of autumn.

Of what use will be a dish of roses to thee?
Take a leaf from my rose-garden.
A flower endures but five or six days

But this rose-garden is always delightful.

After I had uttered these words he threw away the flowers from his skirts, and attached himself to mine, saying: 'When a generous fellow makes a promise he keeps it.'

On the same day I happened to write two chapters, namely on polite society and the rules of conversation, in a style acceptable to orators and instructive to letter-writers. In short, some roses of the garden still remained when the book of the Rose-garden was finished but it will in reality be completed only after approbation in the court of the Shah, who is the refuge of the world, the shadow of God, the ray of his grace, the treasury of the age, the asylum of the Faith, strengthened by heaven, aided against enemies, the arm of the victorious government, the lamp of the resplendent religion, the beauty of mankind, the boast of Islam, Sa'd son of Atabek the great, the majestic Shahanshah, owner of the necks of nations, lord of the kings of Arabia and Persia, the sultan of the land and the sea, the heir of the kingdom of Solomon, Muzaffaruddin Ibu Bekr, son of Sa'd Zanki, may Allah the most high perpetuate the prosperity of them both and direct their inclinations to every good thing.

Perused with a kind glance,
Adorned with approbation by the sovereign,
It will be a Chinese picture-gallery or design of the Arzank,
Hopes are entertained that he will not be wearied
By these contents because a Pose-garden is not a place of displeasure.
The more so as its august preface is dedicated
To Sa'd Abu Bekr Sa'd the son of Zanki.

Record of the Great Amir Fakhruddin Ben Abu Bekr, Son of Abu Nassar

Again, the bride of imagination can for want of beauty not lift up her head nor raise her eyes from the feet of bashfulness to appear in the assembly of persons endowed with pulchritude, unless adorned with the ornaments of approbation from the great Amir, who is learned, just, aided by heaven, victorious, supporter of the throne of the Sultanate and councillor in deliberations of the realm, refuge of the poor, asylum of strangers, patron of learned men, lover of the pious, glory of the dynasty of Pares, right hand of the kingdom, chief of the nobles, boast of the monarchy and of the religion, succour of Islam and of the Musalmans, buttress of kings and sultans, Abu Bekr, son of Abu Nassar, may Allah prolong his life, augment his dignity, enlighten his breast and increase his reward twofold, because he enjoys the praise of all great men and is the embodiment of every laudable quality.

Whoever reposes in the shadow of his favour,
His sin is transmuted to obedience and his foe into a friend.

Every attendant and follower has an appointed duty and if, in the performance thereof, he gives way to remissness and indolence, he is certainly called to account and becomes subject to reproaches, except the tribe of dervishes, from whom thanks are due for the benefits they receive from great men as well as praises and prayers, all of which duties are more suitably performed in their absence than in their presence, because in the latter they look like ostentation and in the former they are free from ceremony.

The back of the bent sky became flat with joy,
When dame nature brought forth a child like thee.

It is an instance of wisdom if the Creator
Causes a servant to make the general welfare his special duty.
He has found eternal happiness who lived a good life,
Because, after his end, good repute will keep his name alive.
No matter whether virtuous men praise you or not
A lovely maid stands in no need of a tire woman.

Excuse for Remissness in Service and Cause for Preferring Solitude

My negligence and backwardness in diligent attendance at the royal court resemble the case of Barzachumihr, whose merits the sages of India were discussing but could at last not reproach him with anything except slowness of speech because he delayed long and his hearers were obliged to wait till he delivered himself of what he had to say. When Barzachumihr heard of this he said: 'It is better for me to consider what to speak than to repent of what I have spoken.'

A trained orator, old, aged,
First meditates and then speaks.
Do not speak without consideration.
Speak well and if slow what matters it?
Deliberate and then begin to talk.
Say thyself enough before others say enough.
By speech a man is better than a brute
But a beast is better unless thou speakest properly.

How then could I venture to appear in the sight of the grandees of my lord, may his victory be glorious, who are an assembly of pious men and the centre of profound scholars? If I were to be led in the ardour of conversation to speak petulantly, I could produce only a trifling stock-in-trade in the noble presence but glass beads are not worth a barleycorn in the bazar of jewellers, a lamp does not shine in the presence of the sun, and a minaret looks low at the foot of Mount Alvend.

Who lifts up his neck with pretentions,
Foes hasten to him from every side.
Sa'di has fallen to be a hermit.
No one came to attack a fallen man.
First deliberation, then speech;
The foundation was laid first, then the wall.

I know bouquet-binding but not in the garden. I sell a sweetheart but not in Canaan. Loqman the philosopher, being asked from whom he had learnt wisdom, replied: 'From the blind, who do not take a step before trying the place.' First move about, then stir out.

Try thy virility first, then marry.
Though a cock may be brave in war
He strikes his claws in vain on a brazen falcon.
A cat is a lion in catching mice
But a mouse in combat with a tiger.

But, trusting in the liberal sentiments of the great, who shut their eyes to the faults of their inferiors

and abstain from divulging the crimes of humble men, we have in this book recorded, by way of abridgment, some rare events, stories, poetry and accounts about ancient kings, spending a portion of our precious life in the task. This was the reason for composing the book Gulistan; and help is from Allah.

This well-arranged composition will remain for years,
When every atom of our dust is dispersed.
The intention of this design was that it should survive
Because I perceive no stability in my existence,
Unless one day a pious man compassionately
Utters a prayer for the works of dervishes.

The author, having deliberated upon the arrangement of the book, and the adornment of the chapters, deemed it suitable to curtail the diction of this beautiful garden and luxuriant grove and to make it resemble paradise, which also has eight entrances. The abridgment was made to avoid tediousness.

I The Manners of Kings
II On the Morals of Dervishes
III On the Excellence of Content
IV On the Advantages of Silence
V On Love and Youth
VI On Weakness and Old Age
VII On the Effects of Education
VIII On Rules for Conduct in Life

At a period when our time was pleasant
The Hejret was six hundred and fifty-six.
Our intention was advice and we gave it.
We recommended thee to God and departed.

Chapter I

The Manners of Kings

Story 1

I heard a padshah giving orders to kill a prisoner. The helpless fellow began to insult the king on that occasion of despair, with the tongue he had, and to use foul expressions according to the saying:

Who washes his hands of life
Says whatever he has in his heart.

When a man is in despair his tongue becomes long and he is like a vanquished cat assailing a dog.

In time of need, when flight is no more possible,
The hand grasps the point of the sharp sword.

When the king asked what he was saying, a good-natured vezier replied: 'My lord, he says: Those who bridle their anger and forgive men; for Allah loveth the beneficent.'

The king, moved with pity, forbore taking his life but another vezier, the antagonist of the former, said: 'Men of our rank ought to speak nothing but the truth in the presence of padshahs. This fellow has insulted the king and spoken unbecomingly.' The king, being displeased with these words, said: 'That lie was more acceptable to me than this truth thou hast uttered because the former proceeded from a conciliatory disposition and the latter from malignity; and wise men have said: "A falsehood resulting in conciliation is better than a truth producing trouble."'

He whom the shah follows in what he says,
It is a pity if he speaks anything but what is good.

The following inscription was upon the portico of the hall of Feridun:

O brother, the world remains with no one.
Bind the heart to the Creator, it is enough.
Rely not upon possessions and this world
Because it has cherished many like thee and slain them.
When the pure soul is about to depart,
What boots it if one dies on a throne or on the ground?

Story 2

One of the kings of Khorasan had a vision in a dream of Sultan Mahmud, one hundred years after his death. His whole person appeared to have been dissolved and turned to dust, except his eyes, which were revolving in their orbits and looking about. All the sages were unable to give an interpretation, except a dervish who made his salutation and said: 'He is still looking amazed how his kingdom belongs to others.'

Many famous men have been buried under ground
Of whose existence on earth not a trace has remained
And that old corpse which had been surrendered to the earth
Was so consumed by the soil that not a bone remains.
The glorious name of Nushirvan survives in good repute
Although much time elapsed since he passed away.
Do good, O man, and consider life as a good fortune,
The more so, as when a shout is raised, a man exists no more.

Story 3

I have heard that a royal prince of short stature and mean presence, whose brothers were tall and good-looking, once saw his father glancing on him with aversion and contempt but he had the shrewdness and penetration to guess the meaning and said: 'O father, a puny intelligent fellow is better than a tall ignorant man, neither is everything bigger in stature higher in price. A sheep is nice to eat and an elephant is carrion.'

The smallest mountain on earth is Jur; nevertheless
It is great with Allah in dignity and station.

Hast thou not heard that a lean scholar
One day said to a fat fool:
'Although an Arab horse may be weak
It is thus more worth than a stable full of asses.'

The father laughed at this sally, the pillars of the state approved of it, but the brothers felt much aggrieved.

While a man says not a word
His fault and virtue are concealed.
Think not that every desert is empty.
Possibly it may contain a sleeping tiger.

I heard that on the said occasion the king was menaced by a powerful enemy and that when the two armies were about to encounter each other, the first who entered the battlefield was the little fellow who said:

'I am not he whose back thou wilt see on the day of battle
But he whom thou shalt behold in dust and blood.
Who himself fights, stakes his own life
In battle but he who flees, the blood of his army.'

After uttering these words he rushed among the troops of the enemy, slew several warriors and, returning to his father, made humble obeisance and said:

'O thou, to whom my person appeared contemptible,
Didst not believe in the impetuosity of my valour.

A horse with slender girth is of use
On the day of battle, not a fattened ox.'

It is related that the troops of the enemy were numerous, and that the king's, being few, were about to flee, but that the puny youth raised a shout, saying: 'O men, take care not to put on the garments of women.' These words augmented the rage of the troopers so that they made a unanimous attack and I heard that they gained the victory on the said occasion. The king kissed the head and eyes of his son, took him in his arms and daily augmented his affection till he appointed him to succeed him on the throne. His brothers became envious and placed poison in his food but were perceived by his sister from her apartment, whereon she closed the window violently and the youth, shrewdly guessing the significance of the act, restrained his hands from touching the food, and said: 'It is impossible that men of honour should die, and those who possess none should take their place.'

No one goes under the shadow of an owl
Even if the homa should disappear from the world.

This state of affairs having been brought to the notice of the father, he severely reproved the brothers and assigned to each of them a different, but pleasant, district as a place of exile till the confusion was quelled and the quarrel appeased; and it has been said that ten dervishes may sleep under the same blanket but that one country cannot hold two padshahs.

When a pious man eats half a loaf of bread
He bestows the other half upon dervishes.
If a padshah were to conquer the seven climates
He would still in the same way covet another.

Story 4

A band of Arab brigands having taken up their position on the top of a mountain and closed the passage of caravans, the inhabitants of the country were distressed by their stratagems and the troops of the sultan foiled because the robbers, having obtained an inaccessible spot on the summit of the mountain, thus had a refuge which they made their habitation. The chiefs of that region held a consultation about getting rid of the calamity because it would be impossible to offer resistance to the robbers if they were allowed to remain.

A tree which has just taken root
May be moved from the place by the strength of a man
But, if thou leavest it thus for a long time,
Thou canst not uproot it with a windlass.
The source of a fountain may be stopped with a bodkin
But, when it is full, it cannot be crossed on an elephant.

The conclusion was arrived at to send one man as a spy and to wait for the opportunity till the brigands departed to attack some people and leave the place empty. Then several experienced men, who had fought in battles, were despatched to keep themselves in ambush in a hollow of the mountain. In the evening the brigands returned from their excursion with their booty, divested themselves of their arms, put away their plunder and the first enemy who attacked them was sleep, till about a watch of the night had elapsed:

The disk of the sun went into darkness.
Jonah went into the mouth of the fish.

The warriors leapt forth from the ambush, tied the hands of every one of the robbers to his shoulders and brought them in the morning to the court of the king, who ordered all of them to be slain. There happened to be a youth among them, the fruit of whose vigour was just ripening and the verdure on the rose-garden of whose cheek had begun to sprout. One of the veziers, having kissed the foot of the king's throne and placed the face of intercession upon the ground, said: 'This boy has not yet eaten any fruit from the garden of life and has not yet enjoyed the pleasures of youth. I hope your majesty will generously and kindly confer an obligation upon your slave by sparing his life.' The king, being displeased with this request, answered:

'He whose foundation is bad will not take instruction from the good,
To educate unworthy persons is like throwing nuts on a cupola.

'It is preferable to extirpate the race and offspring of these people and better to dig up their roots and foundations, because it is not the part of wise men to extinguish fire and to leave burning coals or to kill a viper and leave its young ones.

If a cloud should rain the water of life
Never sip it from the branch of a willow-tree.
Associate not with a base fellow
Because thou canst not eat sugar from a mat-reed.'

The vezier heard these sentiments, approved of them nolens volens, praised the opinion of the king and said: 'What my lord has uttered is the very truth itself because if the boy had been brought up in the company of those wicked men, he would have become one of themselves. But your slave hopes that he will, in the society of pious men, profit by education and will acquire the disposition of wise persons. Being yet a child the rebellious and perverse temper of that band has not yet taken hold of his nature and there is a tradition of the prophet that every infant is born with an inclination for Islam but his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Majusi.'

The spouse of Lot became a friend of wicked persons.
His race of prophets became extinct.
The dog of the companions of the cave for some days
Associated with good people and became a man.

When the vezier had said these words and some of the king's courtiers had added their intercession to his, the king no longer desired to shed the blood of the youth and said: 'I grant the request although I disapprove-of it.'

Knowest thou not what Zal said to the hero Rastam:
'An enemy cannot be held despicable or helpless.
I have seen many a water from a paltry spring
Becoming great and carrying off a camel with its load.'

In short, the vezier brought up the boy delicately, with every comfort, and kept masters to educate

him, till they had taught him to address persons in elegant language as well as to reply and he had acquired every accomplishment. One day the vezier hinted at his talents in the presence of the king, asserting that the instructions of wise men had taken effect upon the boy and had expelled his previous ignorance from his nature. The king smiled at these words and said:

'At last a wolf's whelp will be a wolf
Although he may grow up with a man.'

After two years had elapsed a band of robbers in the locality joined him, tied the knot of friendship and, when the opportunity presented itself, he killed the vezier with his son, took away untold wealth and succeeded to the position of his own father in the robber-cave where he established himself. The king, informed of the event, took the finger of amazement between his teeth and said:

'How can a man fabricate a good sword of bad iron?
O sage, who is nobody becomes not somebody by education.
The rain, in the beneficence of whose nature there is no flaw,
Will cause tulips to grow in a garden and weeds in bad soil.
Saline earth will not produce hyacinths.
Throw not away thy seeds or work thereon.
To do good to wicked persons is like Doing evil to good men.'

Story 5

I saw at the palace-gate of Oglimish the son of a military officer who was endued with marvellous intellect, sagacity, perception and shrewdness; also the signs of future greatness manifested themselves on his forehead whilst yet a small boy.

From his head intelligence caused
The star of greatness to shine.

In short, he pleased the sultan because he had a beautiful countenance and a perfect understanding; and philosophers have said: 'Power consists in accomplishments, not in wealth and greatness in intellect, not in years.' His companions, being envious, made an attempt upon his life and desired to kill him but their endeavours remained fruitless.

What can a foe do when the friend is kind?

The king asked: 'What is the cause of their enmity to thee?' He replied: 'Under the shadow of the monarchy of my lord I have satisfied my contemporaries except the envious, who will not be contented but by the decline of my prosperity, and may the monarchy and good fortune of my lord be perpetual.'

I may so act as not to hurt the feelings of anyone
But what can I do to an envious man dissatisfied with himself?
Die, O envious man, for this is a malady,
Deliverance from which can be obtained only by death.
Unfortunate men sometimes ardently desire
The decline of prosperous men in wealth and dignity.

If in daytime, bat-eyed persons do not see
Is it the fault of the fountain of light, the sun?
Thou justly wishest that a thousand such eyes
Should be blind rather than the sun dark.

Story 6

It is narrated that one of the kings of Persia had stretched forth his tyrannical hand to the possessions of his subjects and had begun to oppress them so violently that in consequence of his fraudulent extortions they dispersed in the world and chose exile on account of the affliction entailed by his violence. When the population had diminished, the prosperity of the country suffered, the treasury remained empty and on every side enemies committed violence.

Who desires succour in the day of calamity,
Say to him: 'Be generous in times of prosperity.'
The slave with a ring in his ear, if not cherished will depart.
Be kind because then a stranger will become thy slave.

One day the Shahnamah was read in his assembly, the subject being the ruin of the dominion of Zohak and the reign of Feridun. The vezier asked the king how it came to pass that Feridun, who possessed neither treasure nor land nor a retinue, established himself upon the throne. He replied: 'As thou hast heard, the population enthusiastically gathered around him and supported him so that he attained royalty.' The vezier said: 'As the gathering around of the population is the cause of royalty, then why dispersest thou the population? Perhaps thou hast no desire for royalty?'

It is best to cherish the army as thy life
Because a sultan reigns by means of his troops.

The king asked: 'What is the reason for the gathering around of the troops and the population?' He replied: 'A padshah must practise justice that they may gather around him and clemency that they may dwell in safety under the shadow of his government; but thou possessest neither of these qualities.'

A tyrannic man cannot be a sultan
As a wolf cannot be a shepherd.
A padshah who establishes oppression
Destroys the basis of the wall of his own reign.

The king, displeased with the advice of his censorious vezier, sent him to prison. Shortly afterwards the sons of the king's uncle rose in rebellion, desirous of recovering the kingdom of their father. The population, which had been reduced to the last extremity by the king's oppression and scattered, now assembled around them and supported them, till he lost control of the government and they took possession of it.

A padshah who allows his subjects to be oppressed
Will in his day of calamity become a violent foe.
Be at peace with subjects and sit safe from attacks of foes
Because his subjects are the army of a just shahanshah.

Story 7

A padshah was in the same boat with a Persian slave who had never before been at sea and experienced the inconvenience of a vessel. He began to cry and to tremble to such a degree that he could not be pacified by kindness, so that at last the king became displeased as the matter could not be remedied. In that boat there happened to be a philosopher, who said: 'With thy permission I shall quiet him.' The padshah replied: 'It will be a great favour.' The philosopher ordered the slave to be thrown into the water so that he swallowed some of it, whereon be was caught and pulled by his hair to the boat, to the stern of which he clung with both his hands. Then he sat down in a corner and became quiet. This appeared strange to the king who knew not what wisdom there was in the proceeding and asked for it. The philosopher replied: 'Before he had tasted the calamity of being drowned, he knew not the safety of the boat; thus also a man does not appreciate the value of immunity from a misfortune until it has befallen him.'

O thou full man, barley-bread pleases thee not.
She is my sweetheart who appears ugly to thee.
To the huris of paradise purgatory seems hell.
Ask the denizens of hell. To them purgatory is paradise.

There is a difference between him whose friend is in his arms
And him whose eyes of expectation are upon the door.

Story 8

Hormuzd, being asked what fault the veziers of his father had committed that he imprisoned them, replied: 'I discovered no fault. I saw that boundless awe of me had taken root in their hearts but that they had no full confidence in my promises, wherefore I apprehended that they, fearing calamities would befall them, might attempt my life and I acted according to the maxim of sages who have said:

'Dread him who dreads thee, O sage,
Although thou couldst cope with a hundred like him.
Seest thou not when the cat becomes desperate
How he plucks out with his claws the eyes of a tiger?
The viper stings the shepherd's foot
Because it fears he will strike his head with a stone.'

Story 9

An Arab king was sick in his state of decrepitude so that all hopes of life were cut off. A trooper entered the gate with the good news that a certain fort had been conquered by the good luck of the king, that the enemies had been captured and that the whole population of the district had been reduced to obedience. The king heaved a deep sigh and replied: 'This message is not for me but for my enemies, namely the heirs of the kingdom.'

I spent my precious life in hopes, alas!
That every desire of my heart will be fulfilled.
My wishes were realized, but to what profit? Since
There is no hope that my past life will return.

The hand of fate has struck the drum of departure.
O my two eyes, bid farewell to the head.
O palm, forearm, and arm of my hand,
All take leave from each other.
Death, the foe of my desires, has fallen on me
For the last time, O friends. Pass near me.
My life has elapsed in ignorance.
I have done nothing, be on your guard.

Story 10

I was constantly engaged in prayer, at the head of the prophet Yahia's tomb in the cathedral mosque of Damascus, when one of the Arab kings, notorious for his injustice, happened to arrive on a pilgrimage to it, who offered his supplications and asked for compliance with his needs.

The dervish and the plutocrat are slaves on the floor of this threshold
And those who are the wealthiest are the most needy.

Then he said to me: 'Dervishes being zealous and veracious in their dealings, unite thy mind to mine, for I am apprehensive of a powerful enemy.' I replied: 'Have mercy upon thy feeble subjects that thou mayest not be injured by a strong foe.'

With a powerful arm and the strength of the wrist
To break the five fingers of a poor man is sin.
Let him be afraid who spares not the fallen
Because if he falls no one will take hold of his hand.
Whoever sows bad seed and expects good fruit
Has cudgelled his brains for nought and begotten vain imaginations.
Extract the cotton from thy ears and administer justice to thy people
And if thou failest to do so, there is a day of retribution.

The sons of Adam are limbs of each other
Having been created of one essence.

When the calamity of time afflicts one limb
The other limbs cannot remain at rest.
If thou hast no sympathy for the troubles of others
Thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man.

Story 11

A dervish, whose prayers met with answers, made his appearance, and Hejaj Yusuf, calling him, said: 'Utter a good prayer for me', whereon the dervish exclaimed: 'O God, take his life.' He replied: 'For God's sake, what prayer is this?' The dervish rejoined: 'It is a good prayer for thee and for all Musalmans.'

O tyrant, who oppressest thy subjects,
How long wilt thou persevere in this?

Of what use is authority to thee?
To die is better for thee than to oppress men.

Story 12

An unjust king asked a devotee what kind of worship is best? He replied: 'For thee the best is to sleep one half of the day so as not to injure the people for a while.'

I saw a tyrant sleeping half the day.
I said: 'This confusion, if sleep removes it, so much the better;
But he whose sleep is better than his wakefulness
Is better dead than leading such a bad life.'

Story 13

I heard a king, who had changed might into day by pleasures, saying in his drunkenness:

'We have in the world no moment more delightful than this,
Because I care neither for good nor for bad nor for anyone.'

A naked dervish, who was sleeping outside in the cold, then said:

'O thou like whom in happiness there is no one in the world,
I take it if thou carest not, we also do not care.'

The king, being pleased with these words of unconcern, held out a bag of a thousand dinars from the window and said: 'Dervish, spread out thy skirt.' He replied: 'Whence can I, who have no robe, bring a skirt?' The padshah took pity on his helpless condition, added a robe to his gift and sent it out to him but the dervish squandered the money in a short time and returned.

Property cannot abide in the hands of the free,
Neither patience in the heart of a lover nor water in a sieve.

The case of the dervish having been brought to the notice of the king when he was not in good humour, he became angry and turned his face away. Therefore it has been said that intelligent and experienced men ought to be on their guard against the violence and despotism of kings because their thoughts are generally occupied with important affairs of state so that they cannot bear to be importuned by the crowd of vulgar persons.

He will be excluded from the beneficence of the padshah
Who cannot watch for the proper opportunity.
Before thou seest the occasion for speaking at hand
Destroy not thy power by heedless talk.

The king said: 'Drive away this impudent and prodigal mendicant who has in so short a time thrown away so much money. He does not know that the Beit-ulmal is intended to offer a morsel to the needy and not to feed the brothers of devils.'

The fool who burns by day a camphor-light
Will soon not have an oil-lamp for the night.

One of councillor-veziers said: 'My lord, it would seem proper to grant to such persons a sufficient allowance to be drawn from time to time so that they may not squander it. But anger and repulsion, as manifested by thee, are unworthy of a generous disposition as also to encourage a man by kindness and then again to distress him by disappointing his expectation.'

The door ought not to be opened to applicants so
That, when it is ajar, it may not be shut again.
Nobody sees the thirsty pilgrims to Hejaz
Crowding at the bank of briny water.
Wherever a sweet spring happens to be
Men, birds and insects flock around it.

Story 14

One of the ancient kings neglected the government of his realm and kept the army in distress. Accordingly the whole of it ran away when a powerful enemy appeared.

If he refrains from giving treasure to the troops
They refrain from putting their hands to the sword.
What bravery will they display in battle array
When their hands are empty and affairs deplorable?

I was on terms of friendship with one of those who had acted treacherously and reproached him, telling him that it was base, ungrateful, despicable and undutiful to abandon an old master when his affairs have changed a little and to disregard the obligations incurred for benefits received during many years. He replied: 'If I inform thee, perhaps thou wilt excuse me for my horse had no barley and my saddle-cloth was pawned. A sultan who grudges money to his troops, they cannot bravely risk their lives for him.'

Give gold to the soldier that he may serve thee.
If thou witholdest gold, he will serve elsewhere.

When a warrior is full, he will be brave infight but if his belly be empty, he will be brave in flight.

Story 15

A vezier, who had been removed from his post, entered the circle of dervishes and the blessing of their society took such effect upon him that he became contented in his mind. When the king was again favourably disposed towards him and ordered him to resume his office, he refused and said: 'Retirement is better than occupation.'

Those who have sat down in the corner of safety
Have bound the teeth of dogs and tongues of men.
They tore the paper up and broke the pen

And are saved from the hands and tongues of slanderers.

The king said: 'Verily we stand in need of a man of sufficient intelligence who is able to carry on the administration of the government.' He replied: 'It is a sign of sufficient intelligence not to engage in such matters.'

The homa excels all other birds in nobility
Because it feeds on bones and injures no living thing.

A donkey, having been asked for what salary he had elected to attend upon the lion, replied: 'That I may consume the remnants of his prey and live in safety from my enemies by taking refuge under his bravery.' Being again asked that, as he had entered into the shadow of the lion's protection and gratefully acknowledged his beneficence, why he had not joined the circle of intimacy so as to be accounted one of his favourite servants, he replied: 'I am in the same way also not safe of his bravery.'

Should a Guebre kindle fire a hundred years
If he falls one moment into it he will be burnt.

It may happen that a companion of his majesty the sultan receives gold and it is possible that he loses his head. Philosophers have said that it is necessary to be on guard of the fickle temper of padshahs because sometimes they are displeased with politeness and at others they bestow robes of honour for rudeness. It is also said that much jocularity is an accomplishment in courtiers but a fault in sages.

Abide thou by thy dignity and gravity.
Leave sport and jocularity to courtiers.

Story 16

One of my friends complained of the unpropitious times, telling me that he had a slender income, a large family, without strength to bear the load of poverty and had often entertained the idea to emigrate to another country so that no matter how he made a living no one might become aware of his good or ill luck.

Many a man slept hungry and no one knew who he was.
Many a man was at the point of death and no one wept for him.

He was also apprehensive of the malevolence of enemies who would laugh behind his back and would attribute the struggle he underwent for the benefit of his family to his want of manly independence and that they will say:

'Behold that dishonourable fellow who will never
See the face of prosperity,
Will choose bodily comfort for himself,
Abandoning his wife and children to misery.'

He also told me that as I knew he possessed some knowledge of arithmetic, I might, through my influence, get him appointed to a post which would become the means of putting his mind at ease and place him under obligations to me, which he could not requite by gratitude during the rest of his life. I

replied: 'Dear friend! Employment by a padshah consists of two parts, namely, the hope for bread and the danger of life, but it is against the opinion of intelligent men to incur this danger for that hope.'

No one comes to the house of a dervish
To levy a tax on land and garden.
Either consent to bear thy anxiety or grief
Or carry thy beloved children to the crows.

He replied: 'Thou hast not uttered these words in conformity with my case nor answered my question. Hast thou not heard the saying? "Whoever commits treachery let his hand tremble at the account."'

Straightness is the means of acceptance with God.
I saw no one lost on the straight road.

Sages have said: 'Four persons are for life in dread of four persons: a robber of the sultan, a thief of the watchman, an adulterer of an informer, and a harlot of the muhtasib. But what has he to fear whose account of the conscience is clear?'

Be not extravagant when in office, if thou desirest
On thy removal to see thy foes embarrassed for imputations against
thee.
Be thou pure, O brother, and in fear of no one.
Washermen beat only impure garments against stones.

I said: 'The story of that fox resembles thy case, who was by some persons seen fleeing with much trouble and asked for the cause of his fear replied: 'I have heard that camels are being forced into the service.' They said: 'O fool, what connection hast thou with a camel and what resemblance does the latter bear to thee?' The fox rejoined: 'Hush. If the envious malevolently say that I am a camel and I am caught, who will care to release me or investigate my case? Till the antidote is brought from Eraq the snake-bitten person dies.' Thou art a very excellent and honest man but enemies sit in ambush and competitors in every corner. If they describe thy character in a contrary manner, thou wouldst be called upon to give explanations to the padshah and incur reproof. Who would on that occasion venture to say anything? Accordingly I am of opinion that thou shouldst retire to the domain of contentment and abandon aspirations to dominion. Wise men have said:

'In the sea there are countless gains,
But if thou desirest safety, it will be on the shore.'

My friend, having heard these words, became angry, made a wry face and began to reproach me, saying: 'What sufficiency of wisdom and maturity of intellect is this? The saying of philosophers has come true, that friends are useful in prison because at table all enemies appear as friends.'

Account him not a friend who knocks at the door of prosperity,
Boasts of amity and calls himself thy adopted brother.
I consider him a friend who takes a friend's hand
When he is in a distressed state and in poverty.

Seeing that he had thus changed and ascribed my advice to an interested motive, I paid a visit to the

President of the State Council and, trusting in my old acquaintance with him, explained the case of my friend whom he then appointed to a small post. In a short time my friend's affable behaviour and good management elicited approbation so that he was promoted to a higher office. In this manner the star of his good luck ascended till he reached the zenith of his aspirations, became a courtier of his majesty the sultan, generally esteemed and trusted. I was delighted with his safe position and said:

'Be not apprehensive of tangled affairs and keep not a broken heart
Because the spring of life is in darkness.'

Do not grieve, O brother in misery,
Because the Ill-merciful has hidden favours.

Sit not morose on account of the turns of time; for patience,
Although bitter, nevertheless possesses a sweet fruit.

At that time I happened to go with a company of friends on a journey to Mekkah and on my return he met me at a distance of two stages. I perceived his outward appearance to be distressed, his costume being that of dervishes. I asked: 'What is the matter?' He replied: 'As thou hast predicted, some persons envied me and brought against me an accusation of treason. The king ordered no inquiry on its truthfulness and my old well-wishers with my kind friends who failed to speak the word of truth forgot our old intimacy.

'Seest thou not in front of the possessor of dignity
They place the hands on their heads, praising him;
But, if fortune's turn causes his fall,
All desire to Place their foot on his head.

'In short, I was till this week undergoing various persecutions, when the news of the pilgrims' approach from Mekkah arrived, whereon I was released from my heavy bonds and my hereditary property confiscated.' I replied: 'Thou hast not paid attention to my remarks when I said that the service of padshahs is like a sea voyage, profitable and dangerous, so that thou wilt either gain a treasure or perish in the waves.'

The khajah either takes gold with both hands to the shore
Or the waves throw him one day dead upon the shore.

Not thinking it suitable to scratch the wound of the dervish more than I had already done and so sprinkle salt thereon, I contented myself with reciting the following two distichs:

Knewest thou not that thou wilt see thy feet in bonds
If the advice of people cannot penetrate into thy ear?

Again, if thou canst not bear the pain of the sting
Put not thy finger into the hole of a scorpion.

Story 17

Several men were in my company whose external appearance displayed the adornment of piety. A

great man who had conceived a very good opinion of these persons had assigned them a fixed allowance but, after one of them had done something unbecoming the profession of dervishes, his opinion changed and they fell into disgrace. I desired in some way to save the allowance of my friends and intended to wait upon the great man but the doorkeeper would not allow me to enter and was rude. I pardoned him, because it has been said:

The door of an amir, vezier or sultan
Is not to be approached without an introduction.
When a dog or a doorkeeper sees a stranger
The former takes hold of his skirt, the latter of his collar.

When those who could at any time approach the presence of the said great man became aware of my case, they took me in with compliments and desired to assign me a high seat but I humbly took a lower one and said:

'Allow me who am the smallest slave
To sit in the line of slaves.'

He said: 'Allah, Allah, what need is there for such words?'

If thou sittest on my head and eyes
I shall be polite, for thou art polite.

In short, I took a seat and we conversed on a variety of topics till the affair of the error of my companions turned up and I said:

'What crime has my lord seen, who was bountiful,
To make the slave despicable in his sight?
To God that magnanimity and bounty is surrendered
Which beholds the crime but nevertheless bestows the bread.'

The governor, being pleased with these words, ordered the support of my friends to be attended to as before and the arrears to be made good. I expressed my gratitude, kissed the ground of obedience, apologized for my boldness, and said:

'Since the Ka'bah has become the Qiblah of wants from distant lands
The people go to visit it from many farsangs.
Thou must suffer the importunity of such as we are
Because no one throws stones on a tree without fruit.'

Story 18

A royal prince, having inherited abundant treasures from his father, opened the hand of liberality and satisfied his impulse of generosity by lavishing without stint benefits upon the army and the population.

A tray of lignum aloes will emit no odour.
Place it on fire, it will smell like ambergris.

If thou wishest to be accounted great, be liberal
Because grain will not grow unless it be sown.

One of his courtiers began heedlessly to admonish him, saying: 'Former kings have by their exertions accumulated this wealth and deposited it for a useful purpose. Cease this movement because calamities may arise in front and enemies in the rear. It is not meet for thee to be helpless at a time of necessity.'

If thou distributest a treasure to the multitude
Each householder will receive a grain of rice.
Why takest thou not from each a barley-corn of silver
That thou mayest accumulate every day a treasure?

The royal prince turned away his face at these words and said: 'God the most high has made me the possessor of this country, to enjoy and to bestow, not to guard and to retain.'

Qarun, who possessed forty treasure houses, perished.
Nushirvan has not died because he obtained a good reputation.

Story 19

It is related that, whilst some game was being roasted for Nushirvan the just during a hunting party, no salt could be found. Accordingly a boy was sent to an adjoining village to bring some. Nushirvan said: 'Pay for the salt lest it should become a custom and the village be ruined.' Having been asked what harm could arise from such a trifling demand, Nushirvan replied: 'The foundation of oppression was small in the world but whoever came augmented it so that it reached its present magnitude.'

If the king eats one apple from the garden of a subject
His slaves will pull him up the tree from the roots.

For five eggs which the sultan allows to be taken by force
The people belonging to his army will put a thousand fowls on the spit.

A tyrant does not remain in the world
But the curse on him abides for ever.

Story 20

I heard that an oppressor ruined the habitations of the subjects to fill the treasury of the sultan, unmindful of the maxim of philosophers, who have said: 'Who offends God the most high to gain the heart of a created being, God will use that very being to bring on his destruction in the world.'

Fire burning with wild rue will not
Cause a smoke like that of afflicted hearts.

The prince of all animals is the lion and the meanest of beasts the ass. Nevertheless sages agree that an ass who carries loads is better than a lion who destroys men.

The poor donkey though void of discernment
Is nevertheless esteemed when he carries a burden.
Oxen and asses who carry loads
Are superior to men oppressing mankind.

When the king had obtained information of some of the oppressor's misdeeds and bad conduct, he had him put on the rack and slain by various tortures.

Thou wilt not obtain the approbation of the sultan
Unless thou seekest the goodwill of his subjects.
If thou desirest God to condone thy transgressions,
Do good to the people whom God has created.

One of the oppressed who passed near him said:

'Not everyone who possesses strength of arm and office
In the sultanate may with impunity plunder the people.
A hard bone may be made to pass down the throat
But it will tear the belly when it sticks in the navel.'

Story 21

It is narrated that an oppressor of the people, a soldier, hit the head of a pious man with a stone and that the dervish, having no means of taking vengeance, preserved the stone till the time arrived when the king became angry with that soldier, and imprisoned him in a well. Then the dervish made his appearance and dropped the stone upon his head. He asked: 'Who art thou, and why hast thou hit my head with this stone?' The man replied: 'I am the same person whom thou hast struck on the head with this stone on such and such a day.' The soldier continued: 'Where hast thou been all this time?' The dervish replied: 'I was afraid of thy dignity but now when I beheld thee in the well I made use of the opportunity.'

When thou seest an unworthy man in good luck
Intelligent men have chosen submission.
If thou hast not a tearing sharp nail
It will be better not to contend with the wicked.
Who grasps with his fist one who has an arm of steel
Injures only his own powerless wrist.
Wait till inconstant fortune ties his hand.
Then, to please thy friends, pick out his brains.

Story 22

A king was subject to a terrible disease, the mention of which is not sanctioned by custom. The tribe of Yunani physicians agreed that this pain cannot be allayed except by means of the bile of a person endued with certain qualities. Orders having been issued to search for an individual of this kind, the son of a landholder was discovered to possess the qualities mentioned by the doctors. The king summoned the father and mother of the boy whose consent he obtained by giving them immense wealth. The qazi issued a judicial decree that it is permissible to shed the blood of one subject for the

safety of the king and the executioner was ready to slay the boy who then looked heavenwards and smiled. The king asked: 'What occasion for laughter is there in such a position?' The youth replied: 'A son looks to the affection of his father and mother to bring his case before the qazi and to ask justice from the padshah. In the present instance, however, the father and mother have for the trash of this world surrendered my blood, the qazi has issued a decree to kill me, the sultan thinks he will recover his health only through my destruction and I see no other refuge besides God the most high.'

To whom shall I complain against thy hand
If I am to seek justice also from thy hand?

The sultan became troubled at these words, tears rushed to his eyes and he said: 'It is better for me to perish than to shed innocent blood.' He kissed the head and eyes of the youth, presented him with boundless wealth and it is said that the king also recovered his health during that week.

I also remember the distich recited
By the elephant-driver on the bank of the Nile:
'If thou knewest the state of the ant under thy foot
It is like thy own condition under the foot of an elephant.'

Story 23

One of the servants of Umrulais had fled but some men, having been sent in pursuit, brought him back. The vezier who bore a grudge towards him desired him to be killed that the other servants may not imitate his example. He placed his head on the ground before Umrulais and said:

'Whatever befalls my head is lawful with thy approbation.
What plea can the slave advance? The sentence is the master's.'

'But, having been nourished by the bounty of this dynasty, I am loth that on the day of resurrection thou shouldst be punished for having shed my blood; but, if thou desirest to kill me, do so according to the provisions of the law.' He asked: 'How am I to interpret it?' The slave continued: 'Allow me to kill the vezier and then take my life in retaliation so that I may be killed justly.' The king smiled and asked the vezier what he thought of the matter. He replied: 'My lord, give freedom to this bastard as an oblation to the tomb of thy father for fear he would bring trouble on me likewise. It is my fault for not having taken account of the maxim of philosophers who have said:

When thou fightest with a thrower of clods
Thou ignorantly breakest thy own head.
When thou shootest an arrow at the face of a foe
Be on thy guard for thou art sitting as a target for him.'

Story 24

King Zuzan had a khajah of noble sentiments and of good aspect who served his companions when they were present and spoke well of them when they were absent. He happened to do something whereby he incurred the displeasure of the king who inflicted a fine on him and also otherwise punished him. The officials of the king, mindful of the benefits they had formerly received from him and being by them pledged to gratitude, treated him kindly whilst in their custody and allowed no one

to insult him.

If thou desirest peace from the foe, whenever he
Finds fault behind thy back praise him to his face.
A vicious fellow's mouth must utter words.
If thou desirest not bitter words, sweeten his mouth.

He was absolved of some accusations brought by the king against him but retained in prison for some. Another king in those regions secretly dispatched a message to him, to the purport that the sovereigns of that country, not knowing his excellent qualities, had dishonoured him, but that if his precious mind (may Allah prosper the end of his affairs) were to look in this direction, the utmost efforts would be made to please him, because the nobles of this realm would consider it an honour to see him and are waiting for a reply to this letter. The khajah, who had received this information, being apprehensive of danger, forthwith wrote a brief and suitable answer on the back of the sheet of paper and sent it back. One, however, of the king's courtiers, who noticed what had taken place, reported to him that the imprisoned khajah was in correspondence with the princes of the adjacent country. The king became angry and desired this affair to be investigated. The courier was overtaken and deprived of the letter, the contents of which were found on perusal to be as follows: 'The good opinion of high personages is more than their servant's merit deserves, who is unable to comply with the honour of reception which they have offered him, because having been nourished by the bounty of this dynasty, he cannot become unthankful towards his benefactor in consequence of a slight change of sentiments of the latter, since it is said:

He who bestows every moment favours upon thee
Is to be pardoned by thee if once in his life he injures thee.'

The king approved of his gratitude, bestowed upon him a robe of honour, gave him presents and asked his pardon, saying: 'I committed a mistake.' He replied: 'My lord, it was the decree of God the most high that a misfortune should befall this servant but it was best that it should come from thy hands which had formerly bestowed favours upon him and placed him under obligations.'

If people injure thee grieve not
Because neither rest nor grief come from the people.
Be aware that the contrasts of friend and foe are from God
Because the hearts of both are in his keeping.
Although the arrow is shot from the bow
Wise men look at the archer.

Story 25

One of the Arab kings ordered his officials to double the allowance of a certain attendant because he was always at the palace expecting orders while the other servants were engaged in amusements and sports, neglecting their duties. A pious man who heard this remarked that high degrees at the court of heaven are similarly bestowed upon servants:

If a man comes two mornings to serve the shah
He will on the third certainly look benevolently on him.
Sincere worshippers entertain the hope

That they will not be disappointed at the threshold of God.

Superiority consists in attending to commands.
The neglect of commands leads to exclusion.
Who possesses the criterion of righteousness
Places the head upon the threshold.

Story 26

It is narrated that a tyrant who purchased wood from dervishes forcibly gave it away to rich -people gratuitously. A pious man passing near said:

'Thou art a snake, stingest whom thou beholdest,
Or an owl; wherever thou sittest thou destroyest.

Although thy oppression may pass among us
It cannot pass with the Lord who knows all secrets.

Oppress not the denizens of the earth
That their supplications may not pass to heaven.'

The tyrant, being displeased with these words, got angry and took no notice of him until one night, when fire from the kitchen fell into the store of his wood and burnt all he possessed-transferring him from his soft bed to a hot mound of ashes-the same pious man happened again to pass and to hear him saying to his friends: 'I do not know whence this fire has fallen into my house.' replied: 'From the smoke of the hearts of dervishes.'

Beware of the smoke of internal wounds
Because at last an internal wound will break out.
Forbear to uproot one heart as long as thou canst
Because one sigh may uproot a world.

Upon the diadem of Kaikhosru the following piece was inscribed:

For how many years and long lives
Will the people walk over my head on the ground?
As from hand to hand the kingdom came to us
So it will also go to other hands.

Story 27

A man had attained great excellence in the art of wrestling, who knew three hundred and sixty exquisite tricks and daily exhibited something new. He had a particular affection for the beauty of one of his pupils whom he taught three hundred and fifty-nine tricks, refraining to impart to him only one. At last the youth had attained such power and skill that no one was able to contend with him and he went so far as to say to the sultan: 'I allow superiority to my teacher on account of his age and from gratitude for his instruction but my strength is not less than his and my skill equal.' The king, who was not pleased with this want of good manners, ordered them to wrestle with each other and a spacious

locality having been fixed upon, the pillars of state and courtiers of his majesty made their appearance. The youth made an onslaught like a mad elephant with an impulse which might have uprooted a mountain of brass from its place but the master, who knew that he was in strength superior to himself, attacked him with the rare trick he had reserved to himself and which the youth was unable to elude; whereon the master, lifting him up with his hands from the ground, raised him above his head and then threw him down. Shouts were raised by the spectators and the king ordered a robe of honour with other presents to be given to the teacher but reproached and blamed the youth for having attempted to cope with his instructor and succumbed. He replied: 'My lord, he has not vanquished me by his strength but there was a slender part in the art of wrestling which he had withheld from me and had today thereby got the upper hand of me.' The master said: 'I had reserved it for such an occasion because wise men have said: "Do not give so much strength to thy friend that, if he becomes thy foe, he may injure thee." Hast thou not heard what the man said who suffered molestation from one whom he had educated?

Either fidelity itself does not exist in this world
Or nobody practices it in our time.
No one had learnt archery from me
Without at last making a target of me.'

Story 28

A solitary dervish was sitting in a corner of the desert when a padshah happened to pass by but, ease having made him independent, he took no notice. The sultan, in conformity with his royal dignity, became angry and said: 'This tribe of rag-wearers resembles beasts.' The vezier said: 'The padshah of the surface of the earth has passed near thee. Why hast thou not paid homage and shown good manners?' He replied: 'Tell the king to look for homage from a man who expects benefits from him and also that kings exist for protecting subjects and subjects not for obeying kings.'

The padshah is the guardian of the dervish
Although wealth is in the glory of his reign.
The sheep is not for the shepherd
But the shepherd for the service of it.

Today thou beholdest one man prosperous
And another whose heart is wounded by struggling.
Wait a few days till the earth consumes
The brain in the head of the visionary.
Distinction between king and slave has ceased
When the decree of fate overtakes them.
If a man were to open the tombs of the dead
He would not distinguish a rich from a poor man.

The king, who was pleased with the sentiments of the dervish, asked him to make a request but he answered that the only one he had to make was to be left alone. The king then asked for advice and the dervish said:

'Understand now while wealth is in thy hand
That fortune and kingdom will leave thy hand.'

Story 29

A vezier paid a visit to Zulnun Misri and asked for his favour, saying: 'I am day and night engaged in the service of the sultan and hoping to be rewarded but nevertheless dread to be punished by him.' Zulnun wept and said: 'Had I feared God, the great and glorious, as thou fearest the sultan, I would be one of the number of the righteous.'

If there were no hope of rest and trouble
The foot of the dervish would be upon the sphere
And if the vezier feared God
Like the king he would be king.

Story 30

A padshah having issued orders to kill an innocent man, the latter said: 'O king, seek not thine own injury on account of the anger thou bearest towards me.' He asked: 'How?' The man replied: 'This punishment will abide with me one moment but the sin of it for ever with thee.'

The period of life has passed away like the desert wind.
Bitter and sweet, ugliness and beauty have passed away.
The tyrant fanded he had done injury to us.
It remained on his neck and passed away from us.

This admonition having taken effect, the king spared his blood.

Story 31

The veziers of Nushirvan happened to discuss an important affair of state, each giving his opinion according to his knowledge. The king likewise gave his opinion and Barzachumihr concurred with it. Afterwards the veziers secretly asked him: 'What superiority hast thou discovered in the opinion of the king above so many other reflections of wise men?' The philosopher replied: 'Since the termination of the affair is unknown and it depends upon the will of God whether the opinion of the others will turn out right or wrong, it was better to agree with the opinion of the king so that, if it should turn out to have been wrong, we may, on account of having followed it, remain free from blame.'

To proffer an opinion contrary to the king's
Means to wash the hands in one's own blood.
Should he in plain day say it is night,
It is meet to shout: 'Lo, the moon and the pleiads!'

Story 32

An impostor arranged his hair in a peculiar fashion, pretended to be a descendant of A'li and entered the town with a caravan from the Hejaz, saying that he had just arrived from a pilgrimage. He also presented an elegy to the king, alleging that he had himself composed it. One of the king's courtiers, who had that year returned from a journey, said: 'I have seen him at Bosrah on the Azhah festival, then how can he be a Haji?' Another said: 'His father was a Christian at Melitah. How can he be a

descendant of A'li? And his poetry has been found in the Divan of Anvari.' The king ordered him to be beaten and expelled the country for his great mendacity. The man said: 'O lord of the surface of the earth, I shall say something more and, if it is not true, I shall deserve any punishment which thou mayest decree.' He asked: 'What is it?'

When a stranger brings before thee buttermilk
Two measures of it will be water and a spoonful sour milk.
If thou hast heard heedless talk from thy slave, be not offended.
A man who has seen the world utters much falsehood.

The king laughed, told him that all his life he had not uttered more true words than these and ordered the present which the fellow hoped for to be got ready.

Story 33

One of the veziers of a king treated his subordinates with kindness and sought the goodwill of his colleagues. Once he happened to be called to account by the king for something he had done whereon his colleagues endeavoured to effect his liberation. Those who guarded him treated him leniently and the great men expatiated upon his good character to the padshah till he renounced all further inquiry. A pious man who took cognizance of this affair said:

'In order to gain the hearts of friends
Sell even the garden of thy father.
In order to boil the pot of well-wishers
Burn even all the furniture of the house.
Do good even to a malevolent fellow.
Tie up the mouth of the dog with a sop.'

Story 34

One of the sons of Harun-ur-Rashid went to his father and angrily informed him that the son of an official had used insulting expressions towards him whereon Harun asked his courtiers what requital he deserved. One of them proposed capital punishment, another the amputation of the tongue whilst a third recommended fine and imprisonment. Then Harun said: 'Oh my son, it would be generous to pardon him but, if thou art unable to do so, use likewise insulting expressions concerning his mother; not however to such a degree as to exceed the bounds of vengeance because in that case the wrong will be on thy side.'

He is not reputed a man by the wise
Who contends with a furious elephant
But he is a man in reality
Who when angry speaks not idle words.

An ill-humoured fellow insulted a man
Who patiently bore it saying: 'O hopeful youth,
I am worse than thou speakest of me
For I am more conscious of my faults than thou.'

Story 35

I was sitting in a vessel with a company of great men when a boat which contained two brothers happened to sink near us. One of the great men promised a hundred dinars to a sailor if he could save them both. Whilst however the sailor was pulling out one, the other perished. I said: 'He had no longer to live and therefore delay took place in rescuing him.' The sailor smiled and replied: 'What thou hast said is certain. Moreover, I preferred to save this one because, when I once-happened to lag behind in the desert, he seated me on his camel, whereas I had received a whipping by the hands of the other. When I was a boy I recited: He, who doth right, doth it to his own soul and he, who doth evil, doth it against the same.'

As long as thou canst, scratch the interior of no one
Because there are thorns on this road.
Be helpful in the affairs of a dervish
Because thou also hast affairs.

Story 36

There were two brothers: one of them in the service of the sultan and the other gaining his livelihood by the effort of his arm. The wealthy man once asked his destitute brother why he did not serve the sultan in order to be delivered from the hardship of labouring. He replied: 'Why labourest thou not to be delivered from the baseness of service because philosophers have said that it is better to eat barley bread and to sit than to gird oneself with a golden belt and to stand in service?'

To leaven mortar of quicklime with the hand
Is better than to hold them on the breast before the amir.

My precious life was spent in considering
What I am to eat in summer and wear in winter.
O ignoble belly, be satisfied with one bread
Rather than to bend the back in service.

Story 37

Someone had brought information to Nushirvan the just that an enemy of his had been removed from this world by God the most high. He asked: 'Hast thou heard anything about his intending to spare me?'

There is no occasion for our rejoicing at a foe's death
Because our own life will also not last for ever.

Story 38

A company of philosophers were discussing a subject in the palace of Kesra and Barzachumihr, having remained silent, they asked him why he took no share in the debate. He replied: 'Veziers are like physicians and the latter give medicine to the sick only but, as I perceive that your opinions are in conformity with propriety, I have nothing to say about them.'

When an affair succeeds without my idle talk
It is not meet for me to speak thereon.
But if I see a blind man near a well
It is a crime for me to remain silent.

Story 39

Harun-ur-Rashid said when the country of Egypt was surrendered to him: 'In contrast to the rebel who had in his arrogance of being sovereign of Egypt pretended to be God, I shall bestow this country upon the meanest of my slaves.' He had a stupid negro, Khosaib by name, whom he made governor of Egypt but his intellect and discrimination were so limited that when the tribe of Egyptian agriculturists complained and stated that they had sown cotton along the banks of the Nile and that an untimely rain had destroyed it he replied: 'You ought to have sown wool.' A pious man heard this, and said:

'If livelihood were increased by knowledge
None would be more needy than the ignorant.
Nevertheless the ignorant receive a livelihood
At which the learned stand aghast.
The luck of wealth consists not in skill
But only in the aid of heaven.
It happens in the world that many
Silly men are honoured and sages despised.
If an alchemist has died in grief and misery,
A fool discovered a treasure amidst ruins.'

Story 40

A Chinese slave-girl having been brought to a king, he desired to have connection with her whilst in a state of intoxication but, as she repelled him, he became angry and presented her to one of his negro-slaves whose upper lip was higher than his nostrils whilst the lower one hung down to his neck. His stature was such that the demon Sakhrah would have been put to flight and a fountain of pitch emitted stench from his armpits.

Thou wouldst say that, till the resurrection, ugliness
Is his stamp as that of Joseph was beauty.
His person was of so wretched an aspect
That his ugliness surpassed all description
And from his armpits we take refuge with Allah,
They were like a corpse in the month of Merdad.

At that time the desire of the negro was libidinous, his lust overcame him, his love leapt up and he took off the seal of her virginity. In the morning the king sought the girl but could not find her and, having obtained information of what had taken place, he became angry, ordered the negro and the girl to be firmly tied together by their hands and feet and to be thrown from the lofty building into a ditch. One of the veziers, placing the face of intercession upon the ground, pleaded that there was no guilt in the negro since all the servants of his majesty usually receive presents and benefits as he had received the girl. The king rejoined: 'What would it have mattered if he had for one night delayed his

enjoyment?' He said: 'My lord, hast thou not heard that it was said:

When a man with a burning thirst reaches a limpid spring,
Think not that he will care for a mad elephant.
When a hungry infidel is in an empty house at table
Reason will not believe that he cares for the Ramazan.'

The king, being pleased with this sally, exclaimed: 'I make thee a present of the negro. What am I to do with the girl?' He replied: 'Give the girl to the negro because that half is also due to a dog of which he has consumed the other half.'

The thirsty heart does not wish for limpid water
Half of which was consumed by a fetid mouth.

How can the king's hand again touch
An orange after it has fallen into dung?

Story 41

Iskandur Rumi, having been asked how he had conquered the east and the west, considering that the treasures, territories, reigns and armies of former kings exceeded his own and they had not gained such a victory, replied: 'Whatever country I conquered by the aid of God the most high, I abstained from distressing its population and spoke nothing but good of the king.'

The intelligent will not call him great
Who speaks ill of the great.

All this is nothing as it passes away:
Throne and luck, command and prohibition, taking and giving.
Injure not the name of those who have passed away
In order that thy own name may subsist.

Chapter II

The Morals of Dervishes

Story 1

One of the great devotees having been asked about his opinion concerning a hermit whom others had censured in their conversation, he replied: 'I do not see any external blemishes on him and do not know of internal ones.'

Whomsoever thou seest in a religious habit
Consider him to be a religious and good man
And, if thou knowest not his internal condition,
What business has the muhtasib inside the house?

Story 2

I saw a dervish who placed his head upon the threshold of the Ka'bah, groaned, and said: 'O forgiving, 0 merciful one, thou knowest what an unrighteous, ignorant man can offer to thee.'

I have craved pardon for the deficiency of my service
Because I can implore no reward for my obedience.
Sinners repent of their transgressions.
Arifs ask forgiveness for their imperfect worship.

Devotees desire a reward for their obedience and merchants the price of their wares but I, who am a worshipper, have brought hope and not obedience. I have come to beg and not to trade. Deal with me as thou deemest fit.

Whether thou killest me or forgivest my crime,
my face and head are on thy threshold.
A slave has nothing to command; whatever thou commandest I obey.

I saw a mendicant at the door of the Ka'bah
Who said this and wept abundantly:
'I ask not for the acceptance of my service
But for drawing the pen of pardon over my sins.'

Story 3

I saw A'bd-u-Qader Gaillani in the sanctuary of the Ka'bah with his face on the pebbles and saying: 'O lord, pardon my sins and, if I deserve punishment, cause me to arise blind on the day of resurrection that I may not be ashamed in the sight of the righteous.'

With my face on the earth of helplessness
I say Every morning as soon as I become conscious:

O thou whom I shall never forget
Wilt thou at all remember thy slave?

Story 4

A thief paid a visit to the house of a pious man but, although he sought a great deal, found nothing and was much grieved. The pious man, who knew this, threw the blanket upon which he had been sleeping into the way of the thief that he might not go away disappointed.

I heard that men of the way of God
Have not distressed the hearts of enemies.
How canst thou attain that dignity
Who quarrelest and wagest war against friends?

The friendship of pure men, whether in thy presence or absence, is not such as Will find fault behind thy back and is ready to die for thee before thy face.

In thy presence gentle like a lamb,
In thy absence like a man-devouring wolf.

Who brings the faults of another to thee and enumerates them
Will undoubtedly carry thy faults to others.

Story 5

Several travellers were on a journey together and equally sharing each other's troubles and comforts. I desired to accompany them but they would not agree. Then I said: 'It is foreign to the manners of great men to turn away the face from the company of the poor and so deprive themselves of the advantage they might derive therefrom because I for one consider myself sufficiently strong and energetic to be of service to men and not an encumbrance. Although I am not riding on a beast, I shall aid you in carrying blankets.' One of them said: 'Do not be grieved at the words thou hast heard because some days ago a thief in the guise of a dervish arrived and joined our company.'

How can people know who is in the dress?
The writer is aware what the book contains.

As the state of dervishes is safe, they entertained no suspicion about him and received him as a friend.

The outward state of Arifs is the patched dress.
It suffices as a display to the face of the people.

Strive by thy acts to be good and wear anything thou listest.
Place a crown on thy head and a flag on thy back.
The abandoning of the world, of lust, and of desire
Is sanctity, not the abandonment of the robe only.
It is necessary to show manhood in the fight.
Of what profit are weapons of war to an hermaphrodite?

We travelled one day till the night set in during which we slept near a fort and the graceless thief, taking up the water-pot of a companion, pretending to go for an ablution, departed for plunder.

A pretended saint who wears the dervish garb
Has made of the Ka'bah's robes the covering of an ass.

After disappearing from the sight of the dervishes, he went to a tower from which he stole a casket and, when the day dawned, the dark-hearted wretch had already progressed a considerable distance. In the morning the guiltless sleeping companions were all taken to the fort and thrown into prison. From that date we renounced companionship and took the road of solitude, according to the maxim: Safety is in solitude.

When one of a tribe has done a foolish thing
No honour is left either to the low or the high.
Seest thou not how one ox of the pasturage
Defiles all oxen of the village?

I replied: 'Thanks be to the God of majesty and glory, I have not been excluded from the advantages enjoyed by dervishes, although I have separated myself from their society. I have profited by what thou hast narrated to me and this admonition will be of use through life to persons like me.'

For one rude fellow in the assembly
The heart of intelligent men is much grieved.
If a tank be filled with rose-water
A dog falling into it pollutes the whole.

Story 6

A hermit, being the guest of a padshah, ate less than he wished when sitting at dinner and when he rose for prayers he prolonged them more than was his wont in order to enhance the opinion entertained by the padshah of his piety.

O Arab of the desert, I fear thou wilt not reach the Ka'bah
Because the road on which thou travellest leads to Turkestan.

When he returned to his own house, he desired the table to be laid out for eating. He had an intelligent son who said: 'Father, hast thou not eaten anything at the repast of the sultan?' He replied: 'I have not eaten anything to serve a purpose.' The boy said: 'Then likewise say thy prayers again as thou hast not done anything to serve that purpose.'

O thou who showest virtues on the palms of the hand
But concealest thy errors under the armpit
What wilt thou purchase, O vain-glorious fool,
On the day of distress with counterfeit silver?

Story 7

I remember, being in my childhood pious, rising in the night, addicted to devotion and abstinence.

One night I was sitting with my father, remaining awake and holding the beloved Quran in my lap, whilst the people around us were asleep. I said: 'Not one of these persons lifts up his head or makes a genuflection. They are as fast asleep as if they were dead.' He replied: 'Darling of thy father, would that thou wert also asleep rather than disparaging people.'

The pretender sees no one but himself
Because he has the veil of conceit in front.
If he were endowed with a God-discerning eye
He would see that no one is weaker than himself.

Story 8

A great man was praised in an assembly and, his good qualities being extolled, he raised his head and said: 'I am such as I know myself to be.'

O thou who reckonest my virtues, refrainest from giving me pain,
These are my open, and thou knowest not my hidden, qualities.

My person is, to the eyes of the world, of good aspect
But my internal wickedness makes me droop my head with shame.
The peacock is for his beauteous colours by the people
Praised whilst he is ashamed of his ugly feet.

Story 9

One of the devotees of Mount Lebanon, whose piety was famed in the Arab country and his miracles well known, entered the cathedral mosque of Damascus and was performing his purificatory ablution on the edge of a tank when his feet slipped and he fell into the reservoir but saved himself with great trouble. After the congregation had finished their prayers, one of his companions said: 'I have a difficulty.' He asked: 'What is it?' He continued: 'I remember that the sheikh walked on the surface of the African sea without his feet getting wetted and today he nearly perished in this paltry water which is not deeper than a man's stature. What reason is there in this?' The sheikh drooped his head into the bosom of meditation and said after a long pause: 'Hast thou not heard that the prince of the world, Muhammad the chosen, upon whom be the benediction of Allah and peace, has said: I have time with Allah during which no cherubim nor inspired prophet is equal to me?' But he did not say that such was always the case. The time alluded to was when Gabriel or Michael inspired him whilst on other occasions he was satisfied with the society of Hafsah and Zainab. The visions of the righteous one are between brilliancy and obscurity.

Thou showest thy countenance and then hidest it
Enhancing thy value and augmenting our desire.

I behold whom I love without an intervention.
Then a trance befalls me; I lose the road;
It kindles fire, then quenches it with a sprinkling shower.
Wherefore thou seest me burning and drowning.

Story 10

One asked the man who had lost his son:

'O noble and intelligent old man!
As thou hast smelt the odour of his garment from Egypt
Why hast thou not seen him in the well of Canaan?'

He replied:

'My state is that of leaping lightning.
One moment it appears and at another vanishes.
I am sometimes sitting in high heaven.
Sometimes I cannot see the back of my foot.
Were a dervish always to remain in that state
He would not care for the two worlds.'

Story 11

I spoke in the cathedral mosque of Damascus a few words by way of a sermon but to a congregation whose hearts were withered and dead, not having travelled from the road of the world of form, the physical, to the world of meaning, the moral world. I perceived that my words took no effect and that burning fire does not kindle moist wood. I was sorry for instructing brutes and holding forth a mirror in a locality of blind people. I had, however, opened the door of meaning and was giving a long explanation of the verse We are nearer unto Him than the jugular vein till I said:

'The Friend is nearer to me than my self,
But it is more strange that I am far from him.
What am I to do? To whom can it be said that he
Is in my arms, but I am exiled from him.'

I had intoxicated myself with the wine of these sentiments, holding the remnant of the cup of the sermon in my hand when a traveller happened to pass near the edge of the assembly, and the last turn of the circulating cup made such an impression upon him that he shouted and the others joined him who began to roar, whilst the raw portion of the congregation became turbulent. Whereon I said: 'Praise be to Allah! Those who are far away but intelligent are in the presence of Allah, and those who are near but blind are distant.'

When the hearer understands not the meaning of words
Do not look for the effect of the orator's force
But raise an extensive field of desire
That the eloquent man may strike the ball of effect.

Story 12

One night I had in the desert of Mekkah become so weak from want of sleep that I was unable to walk and, laying myself down, told the camel driver to let me alone.

How far can the foot of a wretched pedestrian go

When a dromedary gets distressed by its load?
Whilst the body of a fat man becomes lean
A weak man will be dead of exhaustion.

He replied: 'O brother, the sanctuary is in front of us and brigands in the rear. If thou goest thou wilt prosper. If thou sleepest thou wilt die.'

It is pleasant to sleep under an acacia on the desert road
But alas! thou must bid farewell to life on the night of departure.

Story 13

I saw a holy man on the seashore who had been wounded by a tiger. No medicine could relieve his pain; he suffered much but he nevertheless constantly thanked God the most high, saying: 'Praise be to Allah that I have fallen into a calamity and not into sin.'

If that beloved Friend decrees me to be slain
I shall not say that moment that I grieve for life
Or say: What fault has thy slave committed?
My grief will be for having offended thee.

Story 14

A dervish who had fallen into want stole a blanket from the house of a friend. The judge ordered his hand to be amputated but the owner of the blanket interceded, saying that he had condoned the fault. The judge rejoined: 'Thy intercession cannot persuade me to neglect the provision of the law.' The man continued: 'Thou hast spoken the truth but amputation is not applicable to a person who steals some property dedicated to pious uses. More over a beggar possesses nothing and whatever belongs to a dervish is dedicated to the use of the needy.' Thereon the judge released the culprit, saying: 'The world must indeed have become too narrow for thee that thou hast committed no theft except from the house of such a friend.' He replied: 'Hast thou not heard the saying: Sweep out the house of friends and do not knock at the door of foes.'

If thou sinkest in a calamity be not helpless.
Strip thy foes of their skins and thy friends of their fur-coats.

Story 15

A padshah, meeting a holy man, asked him whether he did not sometimes remember him for the purpose of getting presents. He replied: 'Yes, I do, whenever I forget God.'

Whom He drives from his door, runs everywhere.
Whom He calls, runs to no one's door.

Story 16

A pious man saw in a dream a padshah in paradise and a devotee in hell whereon he asked for the reason of the former's exaltation and the latter's degradation, saying that he had imagined the contrary

ought to be the case. He received the following answer: 'The padshah had, for the love he bore to dervishes, been rewarded with paradise and the devotee had, for associating with padshahs, been punished in hell.'

Of what use is thy frock, rosary and patched dress?
Keep thyself free from despicable practices.
Then thou wilt have no need of a cap of leaves.
Have the qualities of a dervish and wear a Tatar cap.

Story 17

A bareheaded and barefooted pedestrian who had arrived from Kufah with the Hejaz-caravan of pilgrims joined us, strutted about and recited:

'I am neither riding a camel nor under a load like a camel.
I am neither a lord of subjects nor the slave of a potentate.
Grief for the present, or distress for the past, does not
trouble me.
I draw my breath in comfort and thus spend my life.'

A camel-rider shouted to him: 'O dervish, where art thou going? Return, for thou wilt expire from hardships.' He paid no attention but entered the desert and marched. When we reached the station at the palm-grove of Mahmud, the rich man was on the point of death and the dervish, approaching his pillow, said: 'We have not expired from hardship but thou hast died on a dromedary.'

A man wept all night near the head of a patient.
When the day dawned he died and the patient revived.

Many a fleet charger had fallen dead
While a lame ass reached the station alive.
Often healthy persons were in the soil
Buried and the wounded did not die.

Story 18

A hermit, having been invited by a padshah, concluded that if he were to take some medicine to make himself weak he might perhaps enhance the opinion of the padshah regarding his merits. But it is related that the medicine was lethal so that when he partook of it he died.

Who appeared to thee all marrow like a pistachio
Was but skin upon skin like an onion.
Devotees with their face towards the world
Say their prayers with their back to the Qiblah.
When a worshipper calls upon his God,
He must know no one besides God.

Story 19

A caravan having been plundered in the Yunan country and deprived of boundless wealth, the merchants wept and lamented, beseeching God and the prophet to intercede for them with the robbers, but ineffectually.

When a dark-minded robber is victorious
What cares he for the weeping of the caravan?

Loqman the philosopher being among the people of the caravan, one of them asked him to speak a few words of wisdom and advice to the robbers so that they might perhaps return some of the property they had plundered because the loss of so much wealth would be lamentable. Loqman replied: 'It would be lamentable to utter one word of wisdom to them.'

The rust which has eaten into iron
Cannot be removed by polishing.
Of what use is preaching to a black heart?
An iron nail cannot be driven into a rock.

Help the distressed in the day of prosperity
Because comforting the poor averts evil from thyself.
When a mendicant implores thee for a thing,
Give it or else an oppressor may take it by force.

Story 20

Despite the abundant admonitions of the most illustrious Sheikh Abulfaraj Ben Juzi to shun musical entertainments and to prefer solitude and retirement, the budding of my youth overcame me, my sensual desires were excited so that, unable to resist them, I walked some steps contrary to the opinion of my tutor, enjoying myself in musical amusements and convivial meetings. When the advice of my sheikh occurred to my mind, I said:

'If the qazi were sitting with us, he would clap his hands.
If the muhtasib were bibbing wine, he would excuse a drunkard.'

Thus I lived till I paid one night a visit to an assembly of people in which I saw a musician.

Thou wouldst have said he is tearing up the vital artery
with his fiddle-bow.
His voice was more unpleasant than the wailing of one who
lost his father.

The audience now stopped their ears with their fingers, and now put them on their lips to silence him. We became ecstatic by the sounds of pleasing songs but thou art such a singer that when thou art silent we are pleased.

No one feels pleased by thy performance
Except at the time of departure when thou pleasest.

When that harper began to sing

I said to the host: 'For God's sake
Put mercury in my ear that I may not hear
Or open the door that I may go away.'

In short, I tried to please my friends and succeeded after a considerable struggle in spending the whole night there.

The muezzin shouted the call to prayers out of time,
Not knowing how much of the night had elapsed.
Ask the length of the night from my eyelids
For sleep did not enter my eyes one moment.

In the morning I took my turban from my head, with one dinar from my belt by way of gratification, and placed them before the musician whom I embraced and thanked. My friends who saw that my appreciation of his merits was unusual attributed it to the levity of my intellect and laughed secretly. One of them, however, lengthened out his tongue of objection and began to reproach me, saying that I had committed an act repugnant to intelligent men by bestowing a portion of my professional dress upon a musician who had all his life not a dirhem laid upon the palm of his hand nor filings of silver or of gold placed on his drum.

A musician! Far be he from this happy abode.
No one ever saw him twice in the same place.
As soon as the shout rose from his mouth
The hair on the bodies of the people stood on end.
The fowls of the house, terrified by him, flew away
Whilst he distracted our senses and tore his throat.

I said: 'It will be proper to shorten the tongue of objection because his talent has become evident to me.' He then asked me to explain the quality of it in order to inform the company so that all might apologize for the jokes they had cracked about me. I replied: 'Although my sheikh had often told me to abandon musical entertainments and had given me abundant advice, I did not mind it. This night my propitious horoscope and my august luck have guided me to this place where I have, on hearing the performance of this musician, repented and vowed never again to attend at singing and convivial parties.'

A pleasant voice, from a sweet palate, mouth and lips,
Whether employed in singing or not, enchants the heart
But the melodies of lovers of Isfahan or of the Hejaz
From the windpipe of a bad singer are not nice.

Story 21

Loqman, being asked from whom he had learnt civility, replied: 'From those who had no civility because what appeared to me unbecoming in them I refrained from doing.'

Not a word is said even in sport
Without an intelligent man taking advice thereby.
But if a hundred chapters of wisdom are read to a fool

All strike his ear merely as sport.

Story 22

It is related that a hermit consumed during one night ten mann of food and perused the whole Quran till morning. A pious fellow who had heard of this said: 'It would have been more excellent if he had eaten half a loaf and slept till the morning.'

Keep thy interior empty of food
That thou mayest behold therein the light of marifet.
Thou art empty of wisdom for the reason
That thou art replete with food up to the nose.

Story 23

A man had by his sins forfeited the divine favour but the lamp of grace nevertheless so shone upon his path that it guided him into the circle of religious men and, by the blessing of his association with dervishes, as well as by the example of their righteousness, the depravities of his character were transmuted into virtues and he refrained from lust and passion. But the tongues of the malevolent were lengthened with reference to his character, alleging that it was the same as it had ever been and that his abstinence and piety were spurious.

By apology and penitence one may be saved from the wrath of God
But cannot be saved from the tongues of men.

He could no longer bear the reviling tongues and complained to the pir of the Tariqat. The sheikh wept and said: 'How wilt thou be able to be sufficiently grateful for this divine favour that thou art better than the people imagine?'

How long wilt thou say: 'The malevolent and envious
Are searching out the defects of my humble self.
Sometimes they arise to shed my blood.
Sometimes they sit down to curse me.'
To be good and to be in spoken of by the people
Is better than to be bad and considered good by them.

Look at me whom the good opinion of our contemporaries deems to be perfect whereas I am imperfection itself.

If I were doing what I speak
I would be of good conduct and a devotee.

Verily I am veiled from the eyes of my neighbours
But Allah knows my secret and my overt concerns.

The door is locked to the access of people
That they may not spread out my faults.
What profiteth a closed door? The Omniscient

Knows what I conceal or reveal.

Story 24

I complained to one of the sheikhs that a certain man had falsely accused me of lasciviousness. He replied: 'Put him to shame by thy good conduct.'

Be thou well behaved that a maligner
May not find occasion to speak of thy faults.
When the harp is in proper tune
How can the hand of the musician correct it?

Story 25

One of the sheikhs of Syria, being asked on the true state of the Sufis, replied: 'In former times they were a tribe in the world, apparently distressed, but in reality contented whereas today they are people outwardly satisfied but inwardly discontented.'

If my heart roams away from thee every hour,
Thou wilt find no tranquillity in solitude
But if thou possessest property, dignity, fields and wares,
If thy heart be with God, thou wilt be a recluse.

Story 26

I remember having once walked all night with a caravan and then slept on the edge of the desert. A distracted man who had accompanied us on that journey raised a shout, ran towards the desert and took not a moment's rest. When it was daylight, I asked him what state of his that was. He replied: 'I saw bulbuls commencing to lament on the trees, the partridges on the mountains, the frogs in the water and the beasts in the desert so I bethought myself that it would not be becoming for me to sleep in carelessness while they all were praising God.'

Yesterday at dawn a bird lamented,
Depriving me of sense, patience, strength and consciousness.
One of my intimate friends who
Had perhaps heard my distressed voice
Said: 'I could not believe that thou
Wouldst be so dazed by a bird's cry.'
I replied: 'It is not becoming to humanity
That I should be silent when birds chant praises.'

Story 27

It once happened that on a journey to the Hejaz a company of young and pious men, whose sentiments harmonized with mine, were my fellow-travellers. They occasionally sung and recited spiritual verses but we had with us also an a'bid, who entertained a bad opinion of the behaviour of the dervishes and was ignorant of their sufferings. When we reached the palm-grove of the Beni Hallal, a black boy of the encampment, falling into a state of excitement, broke out in a strain which brought down the birds

from the sky. I saw, however, the camel of the a'bid, which began to prance, throwing him and running into the desert.

Knowest thou what that matutinal bulbul said to me?
What man art thou to be ignorant of love?
The Arabic verses threw a camel into ecstasy and joy.
If thou hast no taste thou art an ill-natured brute.

When a camel's head is turned by the frenzy of joy
And a man does not feel it, he must be an ass.

When the winds blow over the plain
The branches of the ban-tree bend, not hard rocks.

Whatever thou beholdest chants his praises.
He knows this who has the true perception.
Not only the bulbul on the rosebush sings praises
But every bramble is a tongue, extolling him.

Story 28

The life of a king was drawing to a close and he had no successor. He ordered in his last testament that the next morning after his death the first person entering the gate of the city be presented with the royal crown and be entrusted with the government of the realm. It so happened that the first person who entered was a mendicant who had all his life subsisted on the morsels he collected and had sewn patch after patch upon his clothes. The pillars of the state and grandees of the court executed the injunction of the king and bestowed upon him the government and the treasures; whereon the dervish reigned for a while until some amirs of the monarchy withdrew their necks from his obedience and kings from every side began to rise for hostilities and to prepare their armies for war. At last his own troops and subjects also rebelled and deprived him of a portion of his dominions. This event afflicted the mind of the dervish until one of his old friends, who had been his companion when he was yet himself a dervish, returned from a journey and, seeing him in such an exalted position, said: 'Thanks be to God the most high and glorious that thy rose has thus come forth from the thorn and thy thorn was extracted from thy foot. Thy high luck has aided thee and prosperity with fortune has guided thee till thou hast attained this position. Verily hardship is followed by comfort.'

A flower is sometimes blooming and sometimes withering.
A tree is at times nude and at times clothed.

He replied: 'Brother, condole with me because there is no occasion for congratulation. When thou sawest me last, I was distressed for bread and now a world of distress has overwhelmed me.'

If I have no wealth I grieve.
If I have some the love of it captivates me.
There is no greater calamity than worldly goods.
Both their possession and their want are griefs.

If thou wishest for power, covet nothing

Except contentment which is sufficient happiness.
If a rich man pours gold into thy lap
Care not a moment for thanking him.
Because often I heard great men say
The patience of a dervish is better than the gift of a rich man.

Story 29

A man had a friend, who held the office of devan to the padshah, but whom he had not seen for a long time; and, a man having asked him for the reason, he replied: 'I do not want to see him.' A dependent however of the devan, who also happened to be present, queried: 'What fault has he committed that thou art unwilling to meet him?' He replied: 'There is no fault in the matter but a friend who is a devan may be seen when he is removed from office.'

Whilst in greatness and in the turmoil of busines
They do not like to be troubled by neighbours
But when they are depressed and removed from office
They will lay open their heart's grief to friends.

Story 30

Abu Harirah, may the approbation of Allah be upon him, was in the habit of daily waiting upon the Mustafa, peace on him, who said: 'Abu Harira, visit me on alternate days that our love may increase.' A man said to a devotee: 'Beautiful as the sun is, I never heard that anybody took it for a friend or fell in love with it', and he replied: 'This is because it may be seen daily, except in winter when it is veiled and beloved.'

There is no harm in visiting people
But not till they say: 'It is enough!'
If thou findest fault with thyself
Thou wilt not hear others reproaching thee.

Story 31

A man, being tormented story by a contrary wind in his belly and not having the power to retain it, unwittingly allowed it to escape. He said: 'Friends, I had no option in what I did, the fault of it is not to be ascribed to me and peace has resulted to my internal parts. Kindly excuse me.'

The belly is a prison of wind, O wise man.
No sage retains wind in captivity.
If wind twists thy belly let it out
Because wind in the belly is a burden to the heart.

Story 32

Having become tired of my friends in Damascus, I went into the desert of Jerusalem and associated with animals till the time when I became a prisoner of the Franks, who put me to work with infidels in digging the earth of a moat in Tarapolis, when one of the chiefs of Aleppo, with whom I had formerly

been acquainted, recognized me and said: 'What state is this?' I recited:

'I fled from men to mountain and desert
Wishing to attend upon no one but God.
Imagine what my state at present is
When I must be satisfied in a stable of wretches.

The feet in chains with friends
Is better than to be with strangers in a garden.'

He took pity on my state and ransomed me for ten dinars from the captivity of the Franks, taking me to Aleppo where he had a daughter and married me to her with a dowry of one hundred dinars. After some time had elapsed, she turned out to be ill-humoured, quarrelsome, disobedient, abusive in her tongue and embittering my life:

A bad wife in a good man's house
Is his hell in this world already.
Alas for a bad consort, alas!
Preserve us, O Lord from the punishment of fire.

Once she lengthened her tongue of reproach and said: 'Art thou not the man whom my father purchased from the Franks for ten dinars?' I replied: 'Yes, he bought me for ten dinars and sold me into thy hands for one hundred dinars.'

I heard that a sheep had by a great man
Been rescued from the jaws and the power of a wolf.
In the evening he stroked her throat with a knife
Whereon the soul of the sheep complained thus:
Thou hast snatched me away from the claws of a wolf,
But at last I see thou art thyself a wolf.'

Story 33

A padshah asked a hermit: 'How spendest thou thy precious time?' He replied: 'I am all night engaged in prayer, during the morning in supplications and the rest of the day in restricting my expenses.' Then the king ordered a sufficient allowance to be allotted to him so as to relieve him of the cares of his family.

O thou who art encumbered with a family,
Think no more of ever enjoying freedom.
Cares for children, raiment and food
Restrain thee from the heavenly kingdom.
Every day I renew my determination
To wait upon God until the night.
In the night, while tying the knot of prayer,
I think what my children will eat on the morrow.

Story 34

A man, professing to be a hermit in the desert of Syria, attended for years to his devotions and subsisted on the leaves of trees. A padshah, who had gone in that direction by way of pilgrimage, approached him and said: 'If thou thinkest proper, we shall prepare a place for thee in the town where thou wilt enjoy leisure for thy devotions and others may profit by thy spiritual advice as well as imitate thy good works.' The hermit refused compliance but the pillars of the State were of opinion that, in order to please the king, he ought to spend a few days in town to ascertain the state of the place; so that if he feared that the purity of his precious time might become turbid by association with strangers, he would still have the option to refuse compliance. It is related that the hermit entered the town where a private garden-house of the king, which was a heart-expanding and soul refreshing locality, had been prepared to receive him.

Its red roses were like the cheeks of belles,
Its hyacinths like the ringlets of mistresses
Protected from the inclemency of mid-winter
Like sucklings who have not yet tasted the nurse's milk.

And branches with pomegranates upon them:
Fire suspended from the green-trees.

The king immediately sent him a beautiful slave-girl:

After beholding this hermit-deceiving crescent-moon
Of the form of an angel and the beauty of a peacock,
After seeing her it would be impossible
To an anchorite's nature to remain patient.

After her he sent likewise a slave-boy of wonderful beauty and graceful placidity:

People around him are dying with thirst
And he, who looks like a cupbearer, gives no drink.

The sight cannot be satisfied by seeing him
Like the dropsical man near the Euphrates.

The hermit began to eat delicious food, to wear nice clothes, to enjoy fruit and perfumed confectionery as well as to contemplate the beauty of the slave-boy and girl in conformity with the maxim of wise men, who have said that the curls of belles are fetters to the feet of the intellect and a snare to a sagacious bird.

In thy service I lost my heart and religion with all my learning,
I am indeed the sagacious bird and thou the snare.

In short, the happiness of his former time of contentedness had come to an end, as the saying is:

Any faqih, pir and murid
Or pure minded orator,
Descending into the base world,

Sticks in the honey like a fly.

Once the king desired to visit him but saw the hermit changed from his former state, as he had become red, white and corpulent. When the king entered, he beheld him reclining on a couch of gold brocade whilst the boy and the fairy stood near his head with a fan of peacocks' feathers. He expressed pleasure to behold the hermit in so comfortable a position, conversed with him on many topics and said at the conclusion of the visit: 'I am afraid of these two classes of men in the world: scholars and hermits.' The vezier, who was a philosopher and experienced in the affairs of the world, being present, said: 'O king, the conditions of friendship require thee to do good to both classes. Bestow gold upon scholars that they may read more but give nothing to hermits that they may remain hermits.'

A hermit requires neither dirhems nor dinars.
If lie takes any, find another hermit.

Who has a good behaviour and a secret with God
Is an anchorite without the waqfbread or begged morsel.

With a handsome figure and heart-ravishing ear-tip
A girl is a belle without turquoise-ring or pendants.

A dervish of good behaviour and of happy disposition
Requires not the bread of the rebat nor the begged morsel.
A lady endowed with a beauteous form and chaste face
Requires no paint, adornment or turquoise-ring.

When I have and covet more
It will not be proper to call me an anchorite.

Story 35

In conformity with the above sentiments an affair of importance emerged to a padshah, who thereon vowed that, if it terminated according to his wishes, he would present devotees with a certain sum of money. His wish having been fulfilled, it became necessary to keep his promise. Accordingly he gave a purse of dirhems to one of his confidential servants to distribute it among recluses. It is related that the slave was intelligent and shrewd. He walked about all day and returning at nightfall, kissed the dirhems and deposited them before the king with the remark that he had not found any devotees. The king rejoined: 'What nonsense is this? As far as I know there are four hundred devotees in this town. He said: 'Lord of the world, who is a devotee does not accept money and who accepts it is not a devotee.' The king smiled and said to his courtiers: 'Despite of my wishing to do good to this class of worshippers of God, this rogue bears them emnity and thwarts my wish but truth is on his side.'

If a devotee has taken dirhems and dinars
Find another who is more a devotee than he.

Story 36

One of the ulemma of solid learning, having been asked for his opinion about waqfbread, answered: 'If it be accepted to insure tranquillity of mind from cares for food and to obtain leisure for devotion, it

is lawful but if it be taken for maintenance it is forbidden.'

Bread is taken for the corner of devotion
By pious men and not the corner of devotion for bread.

Story 37

A dervish arrived in a place, the owner of which was of a noble disposition, and had surrounded himself with a company of distinguished and eloquent men, each of whom uttered something elegant or jocular, according to the fashion of wits. The dervish who had travelled through the desert and was fatigued had eaten nothing. One of the company asked him by way of encouragement likewise to say something. The dervish replied: 'I do not possess distinction and eloquence like you and have read nothing so you must be satisfied with one distich of mine.' The company having agreed with pleasure he recited:

'I am hungry and opposite to a table of food
Like a bachelor at the door of a bath of females.'

The company, having thus been apprised of his famished condition, produced a table with bread but as he began to eat greedily the host said: 'Friend, at any rate stop a while till my servants roast some minced meat'; whereon the dervish lifted his head and recited:

'Do not order pounded meat for my table.
To a pounded man simple bread is pounded meat.'

Story 38

A murid said to his pir: 'What am I to do? I am troubled by the people, many of whom pay me visits. By their coming and going they encroach upon my precious time.' He replied: 'Lend something to every one of them who is poor and ask something from every one who is rich and they will come round thee no more.'

If a mendicant were the leader of the army of Islam,
The infidels would for fear of his importunity run as far as China.

Story 39

The son of a faqih said to his father: 'These heart-ravishing words of moralists make no impression upon me because I do not see that their actions are in conformity with their speeches.'

They teach people to abandon the world
But themselves accumulate silver and corn.
A scholar who only preaches and nothing more
Will not impress anyone when he speaks.
He is a scholar who commits no evil,
Not he who speaks to men but acts not himself.

Will you enjoin virtue to mankind and forget your own souls?

A scholar who follows his lusts and panders to his body
Is himself lost although he may show the way.

The father replied: 'My son, it is not proper merely on account of this vain fancy to turn away the face from the instruction of advisers, to travel on the road of vanity, to accuse the ullemma of aberration, and whilst searching for an immaculate scholar, to remain excluded from the benefits of knowledge, like a blind man who one night fell into the mud and shouted: "O Musalmans, hold a lamp on my path." Whereon a courtesan who heard him asked: "As thou canst not see the lamp, what wilt thou see with the lamp?" In the same way the preaching assembly is like the shop of a dealer in linen because if thou bringest no money thou canst obtain no wares and if thou bringest no inclination to the assembly thou wilt not get any felicity.'

He said: 'Listen with thy soul's ear to a scholar
Although his actions may not be like his doctrines.'
In vain does the gainsayer ask:
'How can a sleeper awaken a sleeper?
A man must receive into his ears
The advice although it be written on a wall.'

A pious man came to the door of a college from a monastery.
He broke the covenant of the company of those of the Tariq.
I asked him what the difference between a scholar and a monk
amounts to?
He replied: 'The former saves his blanket from the waves
Whilst the latter strives to save the drowning man.'

Story 40

A man was sleeping dead-drunk on the highway and the bridle of spontaneity had slipped from his hands. A hermit passed near him and considered the disgraceful condition he was in. The youth raised his head and recited: When they passed near something contemptible, they passed it kindly. When thou beholdest a sinner be concealing and meek.

Turn not thy face from a sinner, O anchorite.
Look upon him with benignity.
If I am ignoble in my actions
Pass me by like a noble fellow.

Story 41

A company of vagabonds met a dervish, spoke insulting words to him, struck him and otherwise molested him; whereon he complained to his superior and explained the case. The pir replied: 'My son, the patched frock of dervishes is the garment of resignation and who, wearing it, cannot bear injuries is a pretender not entitled to the frock.'

A large river will not become turbid from stones.
The Arif who feels aggrieved is shallow water yet.

If he injures thee, bear it
Because pardon will purify thee from sin.
O brother, as the end is dust, be dust before thou art
turned into dust.

Story 42

Listen to this story how in Baghdad
A flag and a curtain fell into dispute.
Travel stained, dusty and fatigued, the flag
Said to the curtain by way of reproach:
'I and thou, we are both fellow servants,
Slaves of the sultan's palace.
Not a moment had I rest from service
In season and out of season I travelled about.
Thou hast suffered neither toil nor siege,
Not from the desert, wind, nor dust and dirt.
My step in the march is more advancing.
Then why is thy honour exceeding mine?
Thou art upon moon-faced servants
Or jessamine scented slave girls.
I have fallen into prentice hands.
I travel with foot in fetters and head fluttering.'
The curtain said: 'My head is on the threshold
Not like thine in the heavens.
Who carelessly lifts up his neck
Throws himself upon his neck.'

Story 43

A pious man saw an acrobat in great dudgeon, full of wrath and foaming at the mouth. He asked: 'What is the matter with this fellow?' A bystander said: 'Someone has insulted him.' He remarked: 'This base wretch is able to lift a thousand mann of stones and has not the power to bear one word.'

Abandon thy claim to strength and manliness.
Thou art weak-minded and base, whether thou be a man or woman.
If thou art able, make a sweet mouth.
It is not manliness to strike the fist on a mouth.

Although able to tear up an elephant's front
He is not a man who possessed no humanity.
A man's nature is of earth.
If he is not humble he is not a man.

Story 44

I asked a good man concerning the qualities of the brethren of purity. He replied: 'The least of them is

that they prefer to please their friends rather than themselves; and philosophers have said that a brother who is fettered by affairs relating to himself is neither a brother nor a relative.'

If thy fellow traveller hastens, he is not thy fellow.
Tie not thy heart to one whose heart is not tied to thine.
When a kinsman possesses no virtue and piety
Then severing connection is better than love of kinship.

I remember that an opponent objected to the last two lines, saying: 'God the most high and glorious has in his noble book prohibited the severing of connection with relatives and has commanded us to love them. What thou hast alleged is contrary to it.' I replied: 'Thou art mistaken because according to the Quran, Allah the most high has said: If they both father and mother, strive to induce thee to associate with me that concerning which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not.

A thousand kinsmen who are strangers to God
Are the sacrifice for one stranger who knows him.

Story 45

A kind old man in Baghdad
Gave his daughter to a cobbler.
The cruel little man so bit her
That blood flowed from the daughter's lips.
Next morning the father saw her thus
And going to the bridegroom asked him:
'O mean wretch, what teeth are these?
Chewest thou thus her lips? They are not leather.
I do not say these words in jest,
Leave joking off and enjoy her seriously.
If ill humour becomes fixed in a nature
It will not leave it till the time of death.'

Story 46

A faqih had a very ugly daughter and when she attained puberty no one was inclined to marry her in spite of her dowry and wealth.

Bad is the brocade and damask cloth
Which is upon an ugly bride.

At last it became necessary to marry her to a blind man and it is related that on the said occasion a physician arrived from Serandip who was able to restore sight to the blind. The faqih, being asked why he had not put his son-in-law under treatment, replied: 'I fear that if he is able to see he will divorce my daughter.'

It is better if the husband of an ugly woman is blind.

Story 47

A padshah was casting a glanced of contempt upon a company of dervishes and one of them, understanding by his sagacity the meaning of it, said: 'O king, in this world we are inferior to thee in dignity but more happy in life. In death we are equal and in the resurrection superior to thee.'

Though the master of a country may have enjoyment
And the dervish may be in need of bread
In that hour when both of them will die
They will take from the world not more than a shroud.
When thou takest thy departure from the realm
It will be better to be a mendicant than a padshah.

Externally the dervish shows a patched robe and a shaved head but in reality his heart is living and his lust dead.

He does not sit at the door of pretence away from people
To fight against them if they oppose him
Because when a millstone rolls from a mountain
He is not an A'rif who gets out of the way of the stone.

The way of dervishes is praying, gratitude, service, obedience, almsgiving, contentment, professing the unity of God, trust, submission and patience. Whoever possesses these qualities is really a dervish, although he may wear an elegant robe, whereas a prattler who neglects his orisons, is luxurious, sensual, turns day into night in the bondage of lust, and night into day in the sleep of carelessness, eats whatever he gets, and speaks whatever comes upon his tongue, is a profligate, although he may wear the habit of a dervish.

O thou whose interior is denuded of piety
But wearest outwardly the garb of hypocrisy
Do not display a curtain of seven colours.
Thou hast reed mats inside thy house.

Story 48

I saw bouquets of fresh roses
Tied upon a cupola of grass.
I asked: 'What is despicable grass
To sit also in the line of the roses?'
The grass wept and said: 'Hush!
Companionship does not obliterate nobility.
Although I have no beauty, colour and perfume,
Am I not after all the grass of his garden?
I am the slave of a bountiful lord,
Cherished from old by his liberality.
Whether I possess virtue or not
I hope for grace from the Lord
Although I possess no property
No capital to offer as obedience.

He knows the remedy for the slave
To whom no support remains.
It is customary that the owner gives a writ
Of emancipation to an old slave.
O God, who hast adorned the universe,
Be bountiful to thy old slave.'
Sa'di, take the road to the Ka'bah of submission.
O man of God, follow the way of God.
Unlucky is he who turns his head
Away from this door for he will find no other door.

Story 49

A sage having been asked whether liberality or bravery is better replied: 'He who possesses liberality needs no bravery.'

It is written on the tomb of Behram Gur:
'A liberal hand is better than a strong arm.'

Hatim Tai has passed away but for ever
His high name will remain celebrated for beneficence.
Set aside the zekat from thy property because the exuberant vines
When pruned by the vintner will yield more grapes.

Chapter III

On the Excellence of Contentment

Story 1

A Maghrabi supplicant said in Aleppo in the row of linen-drapers: 'Lords of wealth, if you were just and we contented, the trade of begging would vanish from the world.'

O contentment, make me rich
For besides thee no other wealth exists.
Loqman selected the corner of patience.
Who has no patience has no wisdom.

Story 2

Two sons of amirs were in Egypt, the one acquiring science, the other accumulating wealth, till the former became the ullemma of the period and the other the prince of Egypt; whereon the rich man looked with contempt upon the faqih and said: 'I have reached the sultanate whilst thou hast remained in poverty as before.' He replied: 'O brother, I am bound to be grateful to the most high Creator for having obtained the inheritance of prophets whilst thou hast attained the inheritance of Pharaoh and of Haman, namely the kingdom of Egypt.'

I am that ant which is trodden under foot
Not that wasp, the pain of whose sting causes lament.
How shall I give due thanks for the blessing
That I do not possess the strength of injuring mankind?

Story 3

I heard that a dervish, burning in the fire of poverty and sewing patch upon patch, said to comfort his mind:

'We are contented with dry bread and a patched robe
For it is easier to bear the load of one's own trouble
than that of thanks to others.'

Someone said to him: 'Why sittest thou? A certain man in this town possesses a benevolent nature, is liberal to all, has girded his loins to serve the pious and is ready to comfort every heart. If he becomes aware of thy case, he will consider it an obligation to comfort the mind of a worthy person.' He replied: 'Hush! It is better to die of inanition than to plead for one's necessities before any man.'

It is better to patch clothes and sit in the corner of patience
Than to write petitions for robes to gentlemen.
Verily it is equal to the punishment of hell
To go to paradise as a flunkey to one's neighbour.

Story 4

One of the kings of Persia had sent an able physician to wait upon the Mustafa, the benediction of Allah and peace be on him; and he remained for some years in the Arab country without anyone coming to him to make a trial of his ability or desiring to be treated by him. He went to the Prophet, salutation to him, and complained that although he had been sent to treat the companions, none of them had up to this time taken notice of him or required the services incumbent upon him. The Apostle, salutation to him, replied: 'It is a law with these people not to eat until appetite overpowers them and when some of it yet remains they withdraw their hands from food.' The doctor said: 'This is the cause of health', and kissing the earth of service departed.

The sage begins to speak
Or points his fingers to the dish
When silence would be dangerous
Or abstinance would bring on death.
No doubt his wisdom is in speaking
And his eating bears the fruit of health.

Story 5

A man often made vows of repentance but broke them again till one of the sheikhs said to him: 'I think thou art in the habit of eating a great deal and that thy power of restraining appetite is more slender than a hair, whilst an appetite such as thou nourishest would rupture a chain and a day may come when it will tear thee up.'

A man brought up a wolf's whelp.
When it was brought up it tore him up.

Story 6

It is narrated in the life of Ardeshir Babekan that he asked an Arab physician how much food he must consume daily. He replied: 'The weight of one hundred dirhems will be enough.' The king queried: 'What strength will this quantity give me?' He replied: 'This quantity will carry thee, and whatever is more than that, thou wilt be the carrier of it.'

Eating is for living and praying.
Thou thinkest living is for eating.

Story 7

Two Khorasani dervishes travelled together. One of them, being weak, broke his fast every second night whilst the other who was strong consumed every day three meals. It happened that they were captured at the gate of a town on suspicion of being spies; whereon each of them was confined in a closet and the aperture of it walled up with mud bricks. After two weeks it became known that they were guiltless. Accordingly the doors were opened and the strong man was found to be dead whilst the weak fellow had remained alive. The people were astonished but a sage averred that the contrary would have been astonishing because one of them having been voracious possessed no strength to

suffer hunger and perished whilst the other who was abstemious merely persevered in his habit and remained safe.

When eating little has become the nature of a man
He takes it easy when a calamity befalls him
But when the body becomes strong in affluence
He will die when a hardship overtakes him.
Story 8

One of the philosophers forbade his son to eat much because repletion keeps people ailing. The boy replied: 'O father, it is hunger that kills. Hast thou not heard of the maxim of the ingenious that it is better to die satiated than to bear hunger?' He rejoined: 'Be moderate. Eat and drink but not to excess.'

Eat not so much that it comes up to thy mouth
Nor so little that from weakness thy soul comes up.

Although maintenance of life depends upon food
Victuals bring on disease when eaten to excess.
If thou eatest rose-confectionery without appetite it injures thee
But eating dry bread after a long fast is like rose-preserve.

Story 9

A sick man having been asked what his heart desired replied: 'That it may not desire anything.'

When the bowels are full and the belly pains
There is no use in all other things being right.

Story 10

A grain dealer to whom Sufis were owing some money asked them for it every day in the town of Waset and used harsh language towards them. The companions had become weary of his reproaches but had no other remedy than to bear them; and one of them who was a pious man remarked: 'It is more easy to pacify a hungry stomach with promises of food than a grain dealer with promises of money.'

It is preferable to be without the bounty of a gentleman
Than to bear the insults of the gate-keepers.
It is better to die wishing for meat
Than to endure the expostulations of butchers.

Story 11

A brave warrior who had received a dreadful wound in the Tatar war was informed that a certain merchant possessed a medicine which he would probably not refuse to give if asked for; but it is related that the said merchant was also well known for his avarice.

If instead of bread he had the sun in his table-cloth

No one could see daylight till the day of resurrection.

The warrior replied: 'If I ask for the medicine he will either give it or refuse it and if he gives it maybe it will profit me, and maybe not. At any rate the inconvenience of asking it from him is a lethal poison.'

Whatever thou obtainest by entreaties from base men
Will profit thy body but injure thy soul.

And philosophers have said: 'If for instance the water of life were to be exchanged for a good reputation, no wise man would purchase it because it is preferable to die with honour than to live in disgrace.'

To eat coloquinth from the hand of a sweet-tempered man
Is better than confectionery from the hand of an ill-humoured
fellow.

Story 12

One of the ullemma had many eaters to provide for and only a slender income. This fact he communicated to a great man of whose character he entertained a very favourable opinion but his expectations were disappointed because the man made a wry face and averred that according to his opinion applications from respectable persons for aid are unbecoming.

With a face made sad by misfortune, to a dear friend
Do not go because thou wilt embitter his life also.
For the needful for which thou appliest, go with a fresh and
smiling face.
The man of joyful countenance will not be unsuccessful in his
affairs.

It is related that the great man augmented his stipend a little but considerably diminished his familiarity towards him and when he perceived after some days that it was not as usual, he recited:

'Evil is the food which the time of degradation acquires.
The kettle is indeed placed but the dignity is lowered.'

He increased my bread but diminished my honour.
Poverty is better than the degradation of asking.

Story 13

A dervish wanted something and a man told him that a certain individual possessed untold wealth who, if he were made aware of his want, would not consider it proper to fail in supplying it forthwith. The dervish answering that he had no acquaintance with him, the man proposed to show him the house and when the dervish entered he caught sight of a person with hanging lips and sitting morosely. He returned immediately and being asked what he had done replied: 'I excused him from making me a present when I saw his face.'

Carry not thy necessity to a sour-faced fellow
Because his ill-humour will crush thy hopes.
If thou confidest thy heart's grief, tell it to one
Whose face will comfort thee like ready cash.

Story 14

A year of dearth set in at Alexandria so that even a dervish lost the reins of patience from his hands, the pearls of heaven were withheld from the earth and the lamentations of mankind ascended to the firmament.

There was no wild beast, fowl, fish or ant
Whose wailings prompted by distress had not reached the sky.
For a wonder the heart-smoke of the people did not condense
To form clouds and the torrents of their tears rain.

In such a year there was an hermaphrodite. I owe it to my friends not to describe him because it would be an abandonment of good manners, especially in the presence of great men. On the other hand, it would likewise be improper and in the way of negligence not to mention anything about him because certain people would impute it to the ignorance of the narrator. Accordingly I shall briefly describe him in the following two distichs because a little indicates much and a handful is a sample of a donkey load.

If a Tatar slays that hermaphrodite
The Tatar must not be slain in return.

How long will he be like the bridge of Baghdad
With water flowing beneath and men on the back?

Such a man, a portion of whose eulogy thou hast now heard, possessed in that year boundless wealth, bestowed silver and gold upon the needy and laid out tables for travellers. A company of dervishes who were by the presence of distress on the point of starvation were inclined to accept of his hospitality and consulted me on the subject but I struck my head back from assenting and replied:

A lion does not eat the half of which a dog consumed
Although he may die of hunger in his lair.
Though getting rich in wealth and property like Feridun
A worthless man is to be considered of no account.

Story 15

Hatim Tai, having been asked whether he had seen in the world anyone of more exalted sentiments than himself, replied: 'Yes, one day I slaughtered forty camels to entertain Arab amirs. I had occasion to go out on some business into a corner of the desert, where I noticed a gatherer of briars, who had accumulated a hillock of thistles, and I asked him why he had not become a guest of Hatim since many people had come round to his banquet but he replied:

"Who eats bread by the work of his own hand
Will not bear to be obliged to Hatim Tai."

Then I saw that his sentiments were more exalted than mine.'

Story 16

Moses, to whom be salutation, beheld a dervish who had on account of his nudity concealed himself in the sand exclaiming: 'O Moses, utter a supplication to God the most high to give me an allowance because I am, on account of my distress, on the point of starvation.' Moses accordingly prayed and departed but returning a few days afterwards he saw that the dervish was a prisoner and surrounded by a crowd of people. On asking for the reason he was informed that the dervish had drunk wine, quarrelled, slain a man and was to be executed in retaliation.

If the humble cat possessed wings
He would rob the world of every sparrow-egg.
It may happen that when a weak man obtains power
He arises and twists the hands of the weak.

And if Allah were to bestow abundance upon his servants, they would certainly rebel upon earth.

What has made thee wade into danger, O fool,
Till thou hast perished. Would that the ant had not been able to fly!

When a base fellow obtains dignity, silver and gold,
His head necessarily demands to be knocked.
Was not after all this maxim uttered by a sage?
'That ant is the best which possesses no wings.'

The heavenly father has plenty of honey but the son has a hot disease.

He who does not make thee rich
Knows better what is good for thee than thyself.

Story 17

I noticed an Arab of the desert sitting in a company jewellers at Bosrah and narrating stories to them. He said: 'I had once lost my road in the desert and consumed all my provisions. I considered that I must perish when I suddenly caught sight of a bag full of pearls and I shall never forget the joy and ecstasy I felt on thinking they might be parched grain nor the bitterness and despair when I discovered them to be pearls.'

In a dry desert and among moving sand
It is the same to a thirsty man whether he has pearls or shells in his mouth.
When a man has no provisions and his strength is exhausted
It matters not whether his girdle is adorned with pearls or potsherds.

Story 18

An Arab suffering in the desert from extreme thirst recited:

'Would that before my death
I could one day enjoy my wish
That a river's waves might strike my knee
And I might fill my water-bag.'

In the same manner another traveller lost himself in an extensive region having neither any strength nor food left but he possessed some money and roamed about and the road leading him nowhere he perished from exhaustion. Some people afterwards discovered his corpse with the money in front of it and the following written on the ground:

If possessed of all the Ja'feri gold,
It will avail nothing to a hungry man.
To a poor man burnt in the desert
Boiled turnips are more valuable than pure silver.

Story 19

I never lamented about the vicissitudes of time or complained of the turns of fortune except on the occasion when I was barefooted and unable to procure slippers. But when I entered the great mosque of Kufah with a sore heart and beheld a man without feet I offered thanks to the bounty of God, consoled myself for my want of shoes and recited:

'A roast fowl is to the sight of a satiated man
Less valuable than a blade of fresh grass on the table
And to him who has no means nor power
A burnt turnip is a roasted fowl.'

Story 20

A king with some of his courtiers had during a hunting party and in the winter season strayed far from inhabited places but when the night set in he perceived the house of a dehqan and said: 'We shall spend the night there to avoid the injury of the cold.' One of the veziers, however, objected alleging that it was unworthy of the high dignity of a padshah to take refuge in the house of a dehqan and that it would be best to pitch tents and to light fires on the spot. The dehqan who had become aware of what was taking place prepared some food he had ready in his house, offered it, kissed the ground of service and said: 'The high dignity of the sultan would not have been so much lowered, but the courtiers did not wish the dignity of the dehqan to become high.' The king who was pleased with these words moved for the night into the man's house and bestowed a dress of honour upon him the next morning. When he accompanied the king a few paces at the departure he was heard to say:

'Nothing was lost of the sultan's power and pomp
By accepting the hospitality of a dehqan,
But the corner of the dehqan's cap reached the sun

When a sultan such as thou overshadowed his head.'

Story 21

It is related that a sultan thus addressed a miserly beggar who had accumulated great riches: 'It is evident that thou possessest boundless wealth and we have an affair on hand in which thou canst aid us by way of a loan. When the finances of the country are in a flourishing condition it will be repaid.' The miser replied: 'It is not befitting the power and dignity of a padshah to soil the hands of his noble aspirations with the property of an individual like myself who has collected it grain by grain.' The king replied: 'It does not matter because the money will be spent upon infidels: The wicked women should be joined to the wicked men."

If the water of a Christian's well is impure
What matters it if thou washest a dead Jew therein?

They said: 'The lime-mortar is not clean.'
We replied: 'We shall plug therewith the privy holes."

I heard that he refused to comply with the behest of the king, began to argue and to look insolently; whereon the king ordered the sum in question to be released from his grasp by force and with a reprimand.

If an affair cannot be accomplished with gentleness
He forsooth turns his head to impudence.
Who has no regard for himself
It is proper that no one should pay him any.

Story 22

I met a trader who possessed one hundred and fifty camel loads of merchandise with forty slaves and servants. One evening in the oasis of Kish he took me into his apartment and taking all night no rest kept up an incoherent gabble, saying: 'I have such and such a warehouse in Turkestan, such and such goods in Hindostan; this is the title-deed of such and such an estate and in this affair such and such a man is security.' He said: 'I intend to go to Alexandria because it has a good climate', and correcting himself continued: 'No, because the African sea is boisterous. O Sa'di, I have one journey more to undertake and after performing it I shall during the rest of my life sit in a corner and enjoy contentment.' I asked: 'What journey is that?' He replied: 'I shall carry Persian brimstone to China because I heard that it fetched a high price. I shall also carry Chinese porcelain to Rum and Rumi brocade to India and Indian steel to Aleppo, convey glass-ware of Aleppo to Yemen, striped cloth of Yemen to Pares. After that I shall abandon trading and shall sit down in a shop.' He had talked so much of this nonsenses that no more strength remained in him so he said: 'O Sa'di, do thou also tell me something of what thou hast seen and heard.' I recited:

'Thou mayest have heard that in the plain of Ghur
Once a leader fell down from his beast of burden,
Saying: "The narrow eye of a wealthy man
Will be filled either by content or by the earth
of the tomb."'

Story 23

I heard about a wealthy man who was as well known for his avarice as Hatim Tai for his liberality. Outwardly he displayed the appearance of wealth but inwardly his sordid nature was so dominant that he would not for his life give a morsel of bread to anyone or bestow a scrap upon the kitten of Abu Harirah or throw a bone to the dog of the companions of the cave. In short, no one had seen the door of his house open or his table-doth spread.

The dervish got nothing of his food except the smell.
The fowl picked up the crumbs after his bread-dinner.

I heard that he was sailing in the Mediterranean with the pride of Pharaoh in his head-according to the words of the most high, Until drowning overtook him-when all of a sudden a contrary wind befell the ship, as it is said:

What can thy heart do to thy distressed nature for the wind is not fair?
It is not at all times suitable for a ship.

He uplifted the hands of supplication and began to lament in vain but Allah the most high has commanded: When they sail in a ship they call upon Allah, sincerely exhibiting unto him their religion.

Of what use is the hand of supplication to a needy worshipper
Which is uplifted to God in the time of prayer but in the armpit in the time of bounty?

Bestow comfort with gold and with silver
And thereby also profit thyself.
As this house of thine will remain,
Build it with a silver and a gold brick.

It is narrated that he had poor relations in Egypt who became rich by the remainder of his wealth, tearing up their old cloths and cutting new ones of silk and of Damiari. During the same week I also beheld one of them riding a fleet horse with a fairy-faced slave boy at his heels. I said:

'Wah! If the dead man were to return
Among his kinsfolk and connections
The refunding of the inheritance would be more painful
To the heirs than the death of their relative.'

On account of the acquaintance which had formerly subsisted between us, I pulled his sleeve, and said:

'Eat thou, O virtuous and good man,
What that mean fellow gathered and did not eat.'

Story 24

A weak fisherman caught a strong fish in his net and not being able to retain it the fish overcame him and pulled the net from his hand.

A boy went to bring water from the torrent.
The torrent came and took the boy away.
The net brought every time a fish.
This time the fish went and carried off the net.

The other fishermen were sorry and blamed him for not being able to retain such a fish which had fallen into his net. He replied: 'O brothers, what can be done? My day was not lucky but the fish had yet one remaining. 'Moral: A fisherman cannot catch a fish in the Tigris without a day of luck and a fish cannot die on dry ground without the decree of fate.

Story 25

A man whose hands and feet had been amputated killed a millipede and a pious passer-by exclaimed: 'Praised be Allah! In spite of the thousand feet he possessed he could not escape from a man without hands and feet when his fate had overtaken him.'

When the life-taking foe comes in the rear
Fate ties the legs of a running man.
At the moment when the enemy has slowly arrived
It is useless to draw the Kayanian bow.

Story 26

I have seen a fat fool, dressed in a costly robe, with a turban of Egyptian linen on his head, riding on an Arab horse. Someone said: 'Sa'di, what thinkest thou of this famous brocade upon this ignorant animal?' I replied: 'It is like ugly characters scrawled with gold-water.'

Verily he is like an ass among men,
A calf, a body which is bleating.

This animal cannot be said to resemble a man
Except in his cloak, turban and outward adornment.
Examine all his property and belongings of his estate
Thou wilt find nothing lawful to take except his blood.
If a noble man becomes impoverished imagine not
That his high worth will also decrease.
But if into a silver threshold golden nails are driven
By a Jew, think not that he will thereby become noble.
Story 27

A thief said to a mendicant: 'Art thou not ashamed to stretch out thy hand for a grain of silver to every sordid fellow?' He replied:

'To hold out the hand for a grain of silver
Is better than to get it cut off for one dane and a half.'

Story 28

It is related that an athlete had been reduced to the greatest distress by adverse fortune. His throat being capacious and his hands unable to fill it, he complained to his father and asked him for permission to travel as he hoped to be hoped to be able to gain a livelihood by the strength of his arm.

Excellence and skill are lost unless exhibited.
Lignum aloes is placed on fire and musk rubbed.

The father replied: 'My son, get rid of this vain idea and place the feet of contentment under the skirt of safety because great men have said that happiness does not consist in exertion and that the remedy against want is in the moderation of desires.

No one can grasp the skirt of luck by force.
It is useless to put vasmah on a bald man's brow.

If thou hast two hundred accomplishments for each hair of thy head
They will be of no use if fortune is unpropitious.

What can an athlete do with adverse luck?
The arm of luck is better than the arm of strength.

The son rejoined: 'Father, the advantages of travel are many, such as recreation of the mind entailing profit, seeing of wonderful and hearing of strange things, recreation in cities, associating with friends, acquisition of dignity, rank, property, the power of discriminating among acquaintances and gaining experience of the world, as the travellers in the Tariqat have said:

As long as thou walkest about the shop or the house
Thou wilt never become a man, 0 raw fellow.
Go and travel in the world
Before that day when thou goest from the world.'

The father replied: 'My son, the advantages of travel such as thou hast enumerated them are countless but they regard especially five classes of men: firstly, a merchant who possesses in consequence of his wealth and power graceful male and female slaves and quick-handed assistants, alights every day in another town and every night in another place, has recreation every moment and sometimes enjoys the delights of the world.'

A rich man is not a stranger in mountain, desert or solitude.
Wherever he goes he pitches a tent and makes a sleeping place;
Whilst he who is destitute of the goods of this world
Must be in his own country a stranger and unknown.

Secondly, a scholar, who is for the pleasantness of his speech, the power of his eloquence and the fund of his instruction, waited upon and honoured wherever he goes.

The presence of a learned man is like pure gold

Whose power and price is known wherever he goes.
An ignorant fellow of noble descent resembles Shahrua,
Which nobody accepts in a foreign country.

Thirdly, handsome fellows with whom the souls of pious men are inclined to commingle because it has been said that a little beauty is better than much wealth. An attractive face is also said to be a slave to despondent hearts and the key to locked doors, wherefore the society of such a person is everywhere known to be very acceptable:

A beautiful person meets with honour and respect everywhere
Although perhaps driven away in anger by father and mother.
I have seen a peacock feather in the leaves of the Quran.
I said: 'I see thy position is higher than thy deserts.'
It said: 'Hush, whoever is endowed with beauty,
Wherever he places his foot, hands are held out to receive it.'

When a boy is symmetrical and heart-robbing
It matters not if his father disowns him.
He is a jewel which must not remain in a shell.
A precious pearl everyone desires to buy.

Fourthly, one with a sweet voice, who retains, with a David-like throat, water from flowing and birds from soaring. By means of this talent he holds the hearts of people captive and religious men are delighted to associate with him.

My audition is intent on the beautiful melody.
Who is that performing on the double chord?

How pleasant is the gentle and melancholy lay
To the ear of the boon companions who quaff the morning draught!
Better than a handsome face is a pleasant voice.
The former is joy to the senses, the latter food for the soul.

Fifthly, the artisan, who gains a sufficient livelihood by the strength of his arm, so that his reputation is not lost in struggling for bread; as wise men have said:

If he goes abroad from his own town
The patcher of clothes meets with no bardship or trouble
But if the government falls into ruin
The king of Nimruz will go to bed hungry.

The qualities which I have explained, 0 my son, are in a journey the occasion of satisfaction to the mind, stimulants to a happy life but he, who possesses none of them, goes with idle fancies into the world and no one will ever hear anything about his name and fame.

He whom the turning world is to afflict
Will be guided by the times against his aim.
A pigeon destined not to see its nest again

Will be carried by fate towards the grain and net.

The son asked: 'O father, how can I act contrary to the injunctions of the wise, who have said, that although food is distributed by predestination the acquisition of it depends upon exertion and that, although a calamity may be decreed by fate, it is incumbent on men to show the gates by which it may enter?

'Although daily food may come unawares
It is reasonable to seek it out of doors
And though no one dies without the decree of fate
Thou must not rush into the jaws of a dragon.

'As I am at present able to cope with a mad elephant and to wrestle with a furious lion, it is proper, O father, that I should travel abroad because I have no longer the endurance to suffer misery.

'When a man has fallen from his place and station
Why should he eat more grief? All the horizons are his place.
At night every rich man goes to an inn.
The dervish has his inn where the night overtakes him.'

After saying this, he asked for the good wishes of his father, took leave of him, departed and said to himself:

'A skilful man, when his luck does not favour him,
Goes to a place where people know not his name.'

He reached the banks of a water, the force of which was such that it knocked stones against each other and its roaring was heard to a farsang's distance.

A dreadful water, in which even aquatic birds were not safe,
The smallest wave would whirl off a millstone from its bank.

He beheld a crowd of people, every person sitting with a coin of money at the crossing-place, intent on a passage. The youth's hands of payment being tied, he opened the tongue of laudation and although he supplicated the people greatly, they paid no attention and said:

'No violence can be done to anyone without money
But if thou hast money thou hast no need of force.'

An unkind boatman laughed at him and said:

'If thou hast no money thou canst not cross the river by force.
What boots the strength of ten men? Bring the money for one.'

The young man's heart was irritated by the insult of the boatman and longed to take vengeance upon him. The boat had, however, started; accordingly he shouted: 'If thou wilt be satisfied with the robe I am wearing, I shall not grudge giving it to thee.' The boatman was greedy and turned the vessel back.

Desire sews up the vision of a shrewd man.
Greediness brings fowl and fish into the snare.

As soon as the young man's hand could reach the beard and collar of the boatman, he immediately knocked him down and a comrade of the boatman, who came from the vessel to rescue him, experienced the same rough treatment and turned back. The rest of the people then thought proper to pacify the young man and to condone his passage money.

When thou seest a quarrel be forbearing
Because gentlemen will shut the door of strife.
Use kindness when thou seest contention.
A sharp sword cannot cut soft silk.
By a sweet tongue, grace, and kindliness,
Thou wilt be able to lead an elephant by a hair.

Then the people fell at his feet, craving pardon for what had passed. They impressed some hypocritical kisses upon his head and his eyes, received him into the boat and started, progressing till they reached a pillar of Yunani workmanship, standing in the water. The boatman said: 'The vessel is in danger. Let one of you, who is the strongest, go to the pillar and take the cable of the boat that we may save the vessel.' The young man, in the pride of bravery which he had in his head, did not think of the offended foe and did not mind the maxim of wise men who have said: 'If thou hast given offence to one man and afterwards done him a hundred kindnesses, do not be confident that he will not avenge himself for that one offence, because although the head of a spear may come out, the memory of an offence will remain in the heart.'

'How well,' said Yaktash to Khiltash,
'Hast thou scratched a foe? Do not think thou art safe.'

Be not unconcerned for thou wilt be afflicted
If by thy hand a heart has been afflicted.
Throw not a stone at the rampart of a fort
Because possibly a stone may come from the fort.

As soon as he had taken the rope of the boat on his arm, he climbed to the top of the pillar, whereon the boatman snatched it from his grasp and pushed the boat off. The helpless man was amazed and spent two days in misery and distress. On the third, sleep took hold of his collar and threw him into the water. After one night and day he was cast on the bank, with some life still remaining in him. He began to eat leaves of trees and to pull out roots of grass so that when he had gained a little strength, he turned towards the desert and walked till thirst began to torment him. He at last reached a well and saw people drinking water for a pashizi but possessing none he asked for a coin and showed his destitute condition. The people had, however, no mercy with him, whereon he began to insult them but likewise ineffectually. Then he knocked down several men but was at last overpowered, struck and wounded:

A swarm of gnats will overpower an elephant
Despite of all his virility and bravery.
When the little ants combine together
They tear the skin of a furious lion.

As a matter of necessity he lagged in the rear of the caravan, which reached in the evening a locality very dangerous on account of thieves. The people of the caravan trembled in all their limbs but he said: 'Fear nothing because I alone am able to cope with fifty men and the other youths of the caravan will aid me.' These boastful words comforted the heart of the caravan-people, who became glad of his company and considered it incumbent upon themselves to supply him with food and water. The fire of the young man's stomach having blazed into flames and deprived his hands of the bridle of endurance, hunger made him partake of some morsels of food and take a few draughts of water, till the dev of his interior was set at rest and he fell asleep. An experienced old fellow, who was in the caravan, said: 'O ye people, I am more afraid of this guard of yours than of the thieves because there is a story that a stranger had accumulated some dirhems but could not sleep in the house for fear of the Luris. Accordingly he invited one of his friends to dispel the terrors of solitude by his company. He spent several nights with him, till he became aware that he had money and took it, going on a journey after spending it. When the people saw the stranger naked and weeping the next morning, a man asked: "What is the matter? Perhaps a thief has stolen those dirhems of mine?" He replied: "No, by Allah. The guard has stolen them."'

I never sat secure from a serpent
Till I learnt what his custom was.
The wound from a foe's tooth is severe
Who appears to be a friend in the eyes of men.

'How do you know whether this man is not one of the band of thieves and has followed us as a spy to inform his comrades on the proper occasion? According to my opinion we ought to depart and let him sleep.' The youths approved of the old man's advice and became suspicious of the athlete, took up their baggage and departed, leaving him asleep. He knew this when the sun shone upon his shoulders and perceived that the caravan had started. He roamed about a great deal without finding the way and thirsty as well as dismayed as he was, he sat down on the ground, with his heart ready to perish, saying:

Who will speak to me after the yellow camels have departed?
A stranger has no companion except a stranger.

He uses harshness towards strangers
Who has not himself been exiled enough.

The poor man was speaking thus whilst the son of a king who happened to be in a hunting party, strayed far from the troops, was standing over his head, listening. He looked at the figure of the athlete, saw that his outward appearance was respectable but his condition miserable. He then asked him whence he had come and how he had fallen into this place. The athlete briefly informed him of what had taken place, whereon the royal prince, moved by pity, presented him with a robe of honour and a large sum of money and sent a confidential man to accompany him till he again reached his native town. His father was glad to see him and expressed gratitude at his safety. In the evening he narrated to his father what had befallen him with the boat, mentioned the violence of the boatman, the harshness of the rustics near the well and the treachery of the caravan people on the road. The father replied: 'My son, have not I told thee at thy departure that the brave hands of empty-handed persons are like the broken paw of a lion?'

How well has that empty-handed fighter said:
'A grain of gold is better than fifty mann of strength.'

The son replied: 'O father, thou wilt certainly not obtain a treasure except by trouble, wilt not overcome thy foe unless thou hazardest thy life and wilt not gather a harvest unless thou scatterest seed. Perceivest thou not how much comfort I gained at the cost of the small amount of trouble I underwent and what a quantity of honey I have brought in return for the sting I have suffered.

Although not more can be acquired than fate has decreed
Negligence in striving to acquire is not commendable.

If a diver fears the crocodile's throat
He will never catch the pearl of great price.

The nether millstone is immovable, and therefore must bear a heavy load.

What will a fierce lion devour at the bottom of his den?
What food does a fallen hawk obtain?
If thou desirest to catch game at home
Thou must have hands and feet like a spider.

The father said to his son: 'On this occasion heaven has been propitious to thee and good luck helpful so that a royal person has met thee, has been bountiful to thee and has thereby healed thy broken condition. Such coincidences occur seldom and rare events cannot be reckoned upon.'

The hunter does not catch every time a jackal.
It may happen that some day a tiger devours him.

Thus it happened that one of the kings of Pares, who possessed a ring with a costly beazle, once went out by way of diversion with some intimate courtiers to the Masalla of Shiraz and ordered his ring to be placed on the dome of Asad, promising to bestow the seal-ring upon any person who could make an arrow pass through it. It happened that every one of the four hundred archers in his service missed the ring, except a little boy who was shooting arrows in sport at random and in every direction from the flat roof of a monastery. The morning breeze caused his arrow to pass through the ring, whereon he obtained not only the ring but also a robe of honour and a present of money. It is related that the boy burnt his bow and arrows and on being asked for the cause replied: 'That the first splendour may be permanent.'

It sometimes happens that an enlightened sage
Is not successful in his plans.
Sometimes it happens that an ignorant child
By mistake hits the target with his arrow.

Story 29

I heard that a dervish, sitting in a cave, had closed the doors upon the face of the world, so that no regard for kings and rich persons remained in the eyes of his desire.

Who opens to himself a door for begging
Will till he dies remain a needy fellow.
Abandon greediness and be a king
Because a neck without desire is high.

One of the kings of that region sent him the information that, trusting in the good manners of the respected dervish, he hoped he would partake of bread and salt with him. The sheikh agreed because it is according to the sonna to accept an invitation. The next day the king paid him a visit, the a'bid. leapt up, embraced him, caressed him and praised him. After the monarch's departure the sheikh was asked by one of his companions why he had, against his custom, paid so many attentions to the padshah, the like of which he had never seen before. He replied: 'Hast thou not heard that one of the pious said:

"In whose company thou hast been sitting
To do him service thou must necessarily rise.

Possibly an ear may during a lifetime
Not hear the sound of drum, lute or fife.
The eye may be without the sight of a garden.
The brain may be without the rose or nasrin.
If no feather pillow be at hand
Sleep may be had with a stone under the head
And if there be no sweetheart to sleep with
The hand may be placed on one's own bosom,
But this disreputable twisting belly
Cannot bear to exist without anything."'

Chapter IV

On the Advantages of Silence

Story 1

I said to a friend that I have chosen rather to be silent than to speak because on most occasions good and bad words are scattered concurrently but enemies perceive only the latter. He replied: 'That enemy is the greatest who does not see any good.'

The brother of enmity passes not near a good man
Except to consider him as a most wicked liar.

Virtue is to the eyes of enmity the greatest fault.
Sa'di is a rose but to the eye of enemies a thorn.

The world illumining sun and fountain of light
Look ugly to the eye of the mole.

Story 2

A merchant, having suffered loss of a thousand dinars, enjoined his son not to reveal it to anyone. The boy said: 'It is thy order and I shall not tell it but thou must inform me of the utility of this proceeding and of the propriety of concealment.' He replied: 'For fear the misfortune would be double; namely, the loss of the money and, secondly, the joy of neighbours at our loss.'

Reveal not thy grief to enemies
Because they will say 'La haul' but rejoice.

Story 3

An intelligent youth possessed an abundant share of accomplishments and discreet behaviour so that he was allowed to sit in assemblies of learned men but he refrained from conversing with them. His father once asked him why he did not likewise speak on subjects he was acquainted with. He replied: 'I fear I may be asked what I do not know and be put to shame.'

Hast thou heard how a Sufi drove
A few nails under his sandals
And an officer taking him by the sleeve
Said to him: 'Come and shoe my horse.'

For what thou hast not said no one will trouble thee
But when thou hast spoken bring the proof.

Story 4

A scholar of note had a controversy with an unbeliever but, being unable to cope with him in argument, shook his head and retired. Someone asked him how it came to pass that, with all his eloquence and learning, he had been unable vanquish an irreligious man. He replied: 'My learning is in the Quran, in tradition and in the sayings of sheikhs, which he neither believes in nor listens to. Then of what use is it to me to hear him blaspheming?'

To him of whom thou canst not rid thyself by the Quran and tradition
The best reply is if thou dost not reply anything.

Story 5

Galenus saw a fool hanging on with his hands to the collar of a learned man and insulting him, whereon he said: 'If he were learned he would not have come to this pass with an ignorant man.'

Two wise men do not contend and quarrel
Nor does a scholar fight with a contemptible fellow.
If an ignorant man in his rudeness speaks harshly
An intelligent man tenderly reconciles his heart.
Two pious men keep a hair between them untorn
And so does a mild with a headstrong man.
If however both sides are fools
If there be a chain they will snap it.
An ill-humoured man insulted someone.
He bore it and replied: 'O man of happy issue,
I am worse than thou canst say that I am
Because I know thou art not aware of my faults as I am.

Story 6

Subhan Vail is considered to have had no equal in rhetorics because he had addressed an assembly during a year and had not repeated the same word but, when the same meaning happened to occur, he expressed it in another manner and this is one of the accomplishments of courtiers and princes.

A word if heart-binding and sweet
Is worthy of belief and of approbation.
When thou hast once said it do not utter it again
Because sweets, once partaken of, suffice.

Story 7

I heard a philosopher say that no one has ever made a confession of his own folly except he who begins speaking, whilst another has not yet finished his talk.

Words have a head, O shrewd man, and a tail.
Do not insert thy words between words of others.
The possessor of deliberation, intelligence and shrewdness
Does not say a word till he sees silence.

Story 8

Several officials of Sultan Mahmud asked Hasan Muimandi one day what the sultan had told him about a certain affair. He replied: 'You must yourselves have heard it.' They rejoined: 'What he says to thee he does not think proper to communicate to the like of us.' He answered: 'Because he trusts that I shall not reveal it. Then why do you ask me to do so?'

A knowing man will not utter every word which occurs to him.
It is not proper to endanger one's head for the king's secret.

Story 9

I was hesitating in the conclusion of a bargain for the purchase of a house when a Jew said: 'Buy it for I am one of the landholders of this ward. Ask me for a description of the house as it is and it has no defect.' I replied: 'Except that thou art the neighbour of it.'

A house which has a neighbour like thee
Is worth ten dirhems of a deficient standard
But the hope must be entertained
That after thy death it will be worth a thousand.

Story 10

A poet went to an amir of robbers and recited a panegyric but he ordered him to be divested of his robe. As the poor man was departing naked in the world, he was attacked from behind by dogs, whereon he intended to snatch up a stone but it was frozen to the ground and, being unable to do so, he exclaimed: 'What whore-sons of men are these? They have let loose the dogs and have tied down the stones.' The amir of the robbers who heard these words from his room laughed and said: 'O philosopher, ask something from me.' He replied: 'I ask for my robe if thou wilt make me a present of it.'

We are satisfied of thy gift by departure.

A man was hoping for the gifts of people.
I hope no gift from thee. Do me no evil.

The robber chief took pity upon him, ordered his robe to be restored to him and added to it a sheepskin jacket with some dirhems.

Story 11

An astrologer, having entered his own house, saw a stranger and, getting angry, began to insult him, whereon both fell upon each other and fought so that turmoil and confusion ensued. A pious man who had the scene exclaimed:

'How knowest thou what is in the zenith of the sky
If thou art not aware who is in thy house?'

Story 12

A preacher imagined his miserable voice to be pleasing and raised useless shouts, thou wouldst have said that the crow of separation had become the tune of his song; and the verse- for the most detestable of voices is surely the voice of asses- appears to have been applicable to him. This distich also concerns him:

When the preacher Abu-l-Fares brays
At his voice Istakhar-Fares quakes.

On account of the position he occupied the inhabitants of the locality submitted to the hardship and did not think proper to molest him. In course of time, however, another preacher of that region, who bore secret enmity towards him, arrived on a visit and said to him: 'I have dreamt about thee, may it end well!' 'What hast thou dreamt?' 'I dreamt that thy voice had become pleasant and that the people were comfortable during thy sermons.' The preacher meditated a while on these words and then said: 'Thou hast dreamt a blessed dream because thou hast made me aware of my defect. It has become known to me that I have a disagreeable voice and that the people are displeased with my loud reading. Accordingly I have determined henceforth not to address them except in a subdued voice':

I am displeased with the company of friends
To whom my bad qualities appear to be good.
They fancy my faults are virtues and perfection.
My thorns they believe to be rose and jessamine.
Say. Where is the bold and quick enemy
To make me aware of my defects?

He whose faults are not told him
Ignorantly thinks his defects are virtues.

Story 13

A man used to shout superfluous calls to prayers in the mosque of Sinjar and in a voice which displeased all who heard it. The owner of the mosque, who was a just and virtuous amir, not desirous to give him pain, said: 'My good fellow, in this mosque there are old muezzins' to each of whom I pay five dinars monthly but to thee I shall give ten, if thou wilt go to another place.' The man agreed and went away. Some time afterwards however, he returned to the amir and said: 'My lord, thou hast injured me by turning me away for ten dinars from this place because where I next went they offered me twenty dinars to go to another locality but I refused.' The amir smiled and said: 'By no means accept them because will give thee even fifty dinars.'

No one can scrape the mud from gravel with an axe
As thy discordant shouting scrapes the heart.

Story 14

A fellow with a disagreeable voice happened to be reading the Quran, when a pious man passed near, and asked him what his monthly salary was. He replied: 'Nothing.' He further inquired: 'Then why takest thou this trouble?' He replied: 'I am reading for God's sake.' He replied: 'For God's sake do not

read.'

If thou readest the Quran thus
Thou wilt deprive the religion of splendour.

Chapter V

On Love and Youth

Story 1

Hasan Maimundi was asked that, as the Sultan Mahmud possesses so many beautiful slaves, each of whom is a marvel in the world, how it happens that he manifests towards none of them so much inclination and love as to Iyaz, although he is not more handsome than the others. He replied: 'Whatever descends into the heart appears good to the eye.'

He whose murid' the sultan is
If he does everything bad, it will be good.
But he whom the padshah throws away
Will not be cared for by anyone in the household.

If anyone looks with an unfavourable eye
Even the figure of Joseph will indicate ugliness
And if he looks with the eye of desire on a demon,
He will appear an angel, a cherub in his sigh].

Story 2

It is said that a gentleman possessed a slave of exquisite beauty, whom he regarded with love and affection. He nevertheless said to a friend: 'Would that this slave of mine, with all the beauty and good qualities he possesses, had not a long and uncivil tongue!' He replied: 'Brother, do not expect service, after professing friendship; because when relations between lover and beloved come in, the relations between master and servant are superseded':

When a master with a fairy-faced slave
Begins to play and to laugh
What wonder if the latter coquets like the master
And the gentleman bears it like a slave?

A slave is to draw water and make bricks.
A pampered slave will strike with the fist.

Story 3

I saw a religious man, who had fallen in love with a fellow to such a degree that he had neither strength to remain patient nor to bear the talk of the people but would not relinquish his attachment, despite of the reproaches he suffered and the grief he bore, saying:

I shall not let go my hold of thy skirt
Even if thou strike me with a sharp sword.
After thee I have no refuge nor asylum.

To thee alone I shall flee if I flee.

I once reproached him, asking him what had become of his exquisite intellect so that it had been overcome by his base proclivity. He meditated a while and then said:

'Wherever love has become sultan
Piety's arm has no strength left.
How can a helpless fellow live purely
Who has sunk up to his neck in impurity?'

Story 4

One had lost his heart and bidden farewell to his life because the target which he aimed at was in a dangerous locality, portending destruction and no chance promising a morsel easily coming to the palate nor a bird falling into the trap.

When thy sweetheart's eye has no regard for gold
Mud and gold are of equal value to thee.

I once advised him to abandon his aspiration to a fancy impossible of realization because many persons are enslaved by the same passion like himself, the feet of their hearts being in chains. He lamented and said:

'Tell my friends not to give me advice
Because my eyes are fixed on her wishes.
By the strength of fist and shoulders warriors
Slay enemies but sweethearts a friend.'

It is against the requirements of love to renounce affection to our sweethearts for fear of losing our lives.

Thou who art a slave to thy selfishness
Art mendacious in the game of love.
If there be no way to reach the friend
Friendship demands to die in pursuit of it.

I rise as no other source is left to me
Though the foe may smite me with arrow and sword.
If chance serves me I shall take hold of her sleeve.
Or else I shall go and die on her threshold.

His friends, who considered his position, pitied his state, gave him advice and at last confined him but all to no purpose.

Alas, that the physician should prescribe patience,
Whereas this greedy lust requires sugar.

Hast thou heard that the mistress secretly

Told him who had lost his heart:
'As long as thou possessest thy own dignity,
What will mine amount to in thy eyes?'

It is related that the royal prince who was the object of his affection had been informed to the effect that a good-natured and sweet-spoken youth was constantly attending on the plain, uttering graceful words; and strange tales having been heard of him, it appeared that his heart is inflamed and that he has a touch of insanity in his head. The boy knew that his heart had become attached to him and that he had raised this dust of calamity. Accordingly he galloped towards him. When the youth perceived the prince approaching him, he we and said:

'He who has slain me has come back again.
It seems his heart burns for him whom he has slain.'

Although he accosted the youth graciously, asking him whence he came and what his occupation was, he was so plunged in the depths of the ocean of love that he could not breathe:

If thou recitest the seven portions of the lesson by heart,
When thou art demented by love thou knowest not the A, B, C.

The prince said: 'Why speakest thou not to me? I also belong to the circle of dervishes; nay I am even in their service.' In consequence of the force of the friendly advances of his beloved, he raised his head from the dashing waves of love and said:

'It is a marvel that with thy existence mine remains
That when thou speakest words to me remain.'

Saying these words he uttered a shout and surrendered his life.

It would not be strange if he had been slain at his tent door
But it would be strange that if alive he should escape safe.

Story 5

A schoolboy was so perfectly beautiful and sweet-voiced that the teacher, in accordance with human nature, conceived such an affection towards him that' he often recited the following verses:

I am not so little occupied with thee, O heavenly face,
That remembrance of myself occurs to my mind.
From thy sight I am unable to withdraw my eyes
Although when I am opposite I may see that an arrow comes.

Once the boy said to him: 'As thou strivest to direct my studies, direct also my behaviour. If thou perceivest anything reprovable in my conduct, although it may seem approvable to me, inform me thereof that I may endeavour to change it.' He replied: 'O boy, make that request to someone else because the eyes with which I look upon thee behold nothing but virtues.'

The ill-wishing eye, be it torn out
Sees only defects in his virtue.
But if thou possessest one virtue and seventy faults
A friend sees nothing except that virtue.

Story 6

I remember that one night a dear friend of mine entered when I jumped up in such a heedless way that the lamp was extinguished by my sleeve. A vision appeared in the night and by its appearance the darkness was illuminated.

I was amazed at my luck exclaiming whence this felicity?

He took a seat and began reproving me saying that when I beheld him I extinguished the lamp. I said: 'I thought the sun had risen and wits have said:

When an ugly person comes before the lamp
Arise to him and pull him into the assembly
But if it be a sugar-smiled, sweet-lipped one
Pull him by the sleeve and extinguish the lamp.'

Story 7

One who had for a considerable time not seen his friend asked him where he had been and said he had been longing. He replied: 'To be longing is better than to be satisfied.'

Thou hast come late, O intoxicated idol,
We shall not soon let go thy skirt from the hand.
He who sees his sweetheart at long intervals
Is after all better off than if he sees too much of her.

When thou comest with friends to visit me
Although thou comest in peace thou art attacking.

If my sweetheart associates one moment with strangers
It wants but little and I die of jealousy.
She said smiling: 'I am the lamp of the assembly, O Sa'di,
What is it to me if a moth kills itself?'

Story 8

I remember how in former times I and another friend kept company with each other like two almond kernels in one skin. Suddenly a separation took place but after a time, when my companion returned, he commenced to blame me for not having sent him a messenger during it. I replied: 'I thought it would be a pity that the eyes of a messenger should be brightened by thy beauty and I deprived thereof.'

Tell my old friend not to give me advice with the tongue

Because even a sword will not compel me to repent.
I am jealous that anyone should see thee to satiety.
Again I say that no one will be satiated.

Story 9

I knew a learned man who had fallen in love with someone but his secret having fallen from the veil of concealment into publicity, he endured abundant persecution and displayed boundless patience. I said once to him by way of consolation: 'I know thou entertainest no worldly motive nor inclination for baseness. It is nevertheless unbecoming the dignity of a scholar to expose himself to suspicions and to bear the persecutions of mannerless persons.' He replied: 'O friend, take off the hand of reproach from my skirt because I have often meditated on the opinion which thou entertainest but have found it easier to bear persecution for his sake than not to see him; and philosophers have said that it is easier to accustom the heart to strife, than to turn away the eye from seeing the beloved.

Who has his heart with a heart-ravisher
Has his beard in another's hand.
A gazelle with a halter on the neck
Is not able to walk of its own accord.
If he, without whom one cannot abide,
Becomes insolent it must be endured.
I one day told him to beware of his friend
But I often asked pardon for that day.
A friend does not abandon a friend.
I submit my heart to what he wills.
Whether he kindly calls me to himself
Or drives me away in anger he knows best.

Story 10

In the exuberance of youth, as it usually happens and as thou knowest, I was on the closest terms of intimacy with a sweetheart who had a melodious voice and a form beautiful like the moon just rising.

He, the down of whose cheek drinks the water of immortality,
Whoever looks at his sugar lips eats sweetmeats.

I happened to notice something in his behaviour which was contrary to nature and not approved of by me. Accordingly I gathered up my skirt from him and, picking up the pieces of the chess-game of friendship, recited:

'Go and do as thou listest.
Thou hast not our head; follow thine.'

I heard him saying when he went away:

'If the bat desires not union with the sun
The beauty of the sun will not decrease.'

Saying this, he departed and his distress took effect on me:

I lost the time of union and man is ignorant
Of the value of delightful life before adversity.

Return. Slay me. For to die in thy presence
Is more sweet than to live after thee.

Thanks be to the bounty of God, he returned some time afterwards but his melodious voice had changed, his Joseph like beauty had faded, on the apple of his skin dust had settled as upon a quince so that the splendour of his beauty had departed. He wanted me to embrace him. I complied and said:

'On the day when thou hadst a beauteous incipient beard
Thou drovest him, who desired the sight, from thy sight.
Today thou camest to make peace with him
But hast exhibited Fathah and Zammah.

His fresh spring is gone and he has become yellow.
Bring not the kettle because our fire is extinguished.
How long wilt thou strut about, showing arrogance,
Imagining felicity which has elapsed?
Go to him who will purchase thee.
Coquet with him who asks for thee.

They said: "Verdure in the garden is pleasing."
He knows it who utters these words.
Namely, heartfelt affection for that green line
Fascinates the hearts of lovers more and more.
Thy garden is a bed of leeks.
The more thou weedest it the more they grow.

Whether thou pluckest out thy beard or not
This happiness of youthful days must end.
Had I the power of life as thou of the beard
I would not let it end till resurrection-day.

I asked and said: What has befallen the beauty of thy face
That ants are crawling round the moon?
He replied, smiling: "I know not what is the matter with my face.
Perhaps it wears black as mourning for my beauty."'

Story 11

I asked one of the people of Baghdad what he thought of beardless youths. He replied: 'There is no good in them for when one of them is yet delicate and wanted he is insolent; but when he becomes rough and is not wanted he is affable.'

When a beardless youth is beautiful and sweet

His speech is bitter, his temper hasty.
When his beard grows and he attains puberty
He associates with men and seeks affection.

Story 12

One of the ullemma had been asked that, supposing one sits with a moon-faced beauty in a private apartment, the doors being closed, companions asleep, passion inflamed, and lust raging, as the Arab says, the date is ripe and its guardian not forbidding, whether he thought the power of abstinence would cause the man to remain in safety. He replied: 'If he remains in safety from the moon-faced one, he will not remain safe from evil speakers.'

If a man escapes from his own bad lust
He will not escape from the bad suspicions of accusers.

It is proper to sit down to one's own work
But it is impossible to bind the tongues of men.

Story 13

A parrot, having been imprisoned in a cage with a crow, was vexed by the sight and said: 'What a loathsome aspect is this! What an odious figure! What cursed object with rude habits! 0 crow of separation, would that the distance of the east from the west were between us.'

Whoever beholds thee when he rises in the morning
The morn of a day of safety becomes evening to him.
An ill-omened one like thyself is fit to keep thee company
But where in the world is one like thee?

More strange still, the crow was similarly distressed by the proximity of the parrot and, having become disgusted, was shouting 'La haul', and lamenting the vicissitudes of time. He rubbed the claws of sorrow against each other and said: 'What ill-luck is this? What base destiny and chameleonlike times? It was befitting my dignity to strut about on a garden-wall in the society of another crow.

'It is sufficient imprisonment for a devote
To be in the same stable with profligates.

'What sin have I committed that I have already in this life, as a punishment for it, fallen into the bonds of this calamity in company with such a conceited, uncongenial and heedless fool?'

No one will approach the foot of the wall
Upon which they paint thy portrait.
If thy place were in paradise
Others would select. hell.

I have added this parable to let thee know that no matter how much a learned man may hate an ignorant man the latter hates him equally.

A hermit was among profligates
When one of them, a Balkhi beauty, said:
'If thou art tired of us sit not sour
For thou art thyself bitter in our midst.'

An assembly joined together like roses and tulips!
Thou art withered wood, growing in its midst,
Like a contrary wind and unpleasant frost,
Like snow inert, like ice bound fast.

Story 14

I had a companion with whom I had travelled for years and eaten salt. Boundless intimacy subsisted between us till at last he suffered my mind to be grieved for the sake of some paltry gain and our friendship closed. Despite of an this, however, mutual attachment of heart still subsisted between us because I heard him one day reciting in an assembly the following two distichs of my composition:

When my sweetheart enters sweetly smiling
She adds more salt to my bleeding wound.
How would it be if the tip of her curls fell into my hand
Like the sleeve of the bountiful into the hands of dervishes?

Some friends bore witness not so much to the gracefulness of these verses as to the beauty of my conduct which they approved; and among the rest, the said friend likewise added his share of praise, regretting the loss of our former companionship and confessing his fault so that his affection became known. Accordingly I sent the following distichs and made peace:

Was not there a covenant of friendship between us?
Thou hast been cruel and not loving.
I once tied my heart to thee, disregarding the world.
Not knowing thou wouldst turn back so soon.
If thou yet desirest conciliation, return
Because thou wilt be more beloved than before.

Story 15

The beautiful wife of a man died but her mother, a decrepit old hag, remained in the house on account of the dowry. The man saw no means of escaping from contact with her until a company of friends paid him a visit of condolence and one of them asked him how he bore the loss of his beloved. He replied: 'It is not as painful not to see my wife as to see the mother of my wife.'

The rose has been destroyed and the thorn remained.
The treasure has been taken and the serpent left.
It is better that one's eye be fixed on a spear-head
Than that it should behold the face of an enemy.
It is incumbent to sever connection with a thousand friends
Rather than to behold a single foe.

Story 16

I remember having in the days of my youth passed through a street, intending to see a moon-faced beauty. It was in Temuz, whose heat dried up the saliva in the mouth and whose simum boiled the marrow in my bones. My weak human nature being unable to endure the scorching sun, I took refuge in the shadow of a wall, wishing someone might relieve me from the summer heat and quench my fire with some water; and lo, all of a sudden, from the darkness of the porch of a house a light shone forth, namely a beauty, the grace of which the tongue of eloquence is unable to describe. She came out like the rising dawn after an obscure night or the water of immortality gushing from a dark cavern, carrying in her hand a bowl of snow-water, into which sugar had been poured and essence of roses mixed. I knew not whether she had perfumed it with rose-water or whether a few drops from her rosy face had fallen into it. In short, I took the beverage from her beautiful hands, drank it and began to live again.

The thirst of my heart cannot be quenched
By sipping limpid water even if I drink oceans of it.

Blessed is the man of happy destiny whose eye
Alights every morning on such a countenance.
One drunk of wine awakens at midnight,
One drunk of the cupbearer on the morn of resurrection.

Story 17

In the year when Muhammad Khovarezm Shah concluded peace with the king of Khata to suit his own purpose, I entered the cathedral mosque of Kashgar and saw an extremely handsome, graceful boy as described in the simile:

Thy master has taught thee to coquet and to ravish hearts,
Instructed thee to oppose, to dally, to blame and to be severe.
A person of such figure, temper, stature and gait
I have not seen; perhaps he learnt these tricks from a fairy.

He was holding in his hand the introduction to Zamaksharni's Arabic syntax and reciting: Zaid struck Amru and was the injurer of Amru. I said: 'Boy! Khovarezm and Khata have concluded peace, and the quarrel between Zaid and Amru still subsists!' He smiled and asked for my birthplace. I replied: 'The soil of Shiraz.' He continued: 'What rememberest thou of the compositions of Sa'di?' I recited:

'I am tired by a nahvi who makes a furious attack
Upon me, like Zaid in his opposition to Amru.
When Zaid submits he does not raise his head
And how can elevation subsist when submission is the regent?

He considered awhile and then said: 'Most of his poetry current in this country is in the Persian language. If thou wilt recite some, it will be more easily understood.' Then I said:

'When thy nature has enticed thee with syntax
It blotted out the form of intellect from our heart.

Alas, the hearts of lovers are captive in thy snare.
We are occupied with thee but thou with Amru and Zaid.'

The next morning, when I was about to depart, some people told him that I was Sa'di, whereon he came running to me and politely expressed his regret that I had not revealed my identity before so that he might have girded his loins to serve me in token of the gratitude due to the presence of a great man.

In spite of thy presence no voice came to say: I am he.

He also said: 'What would it be if thou wert to spend in this country some days in repose that we might derive advantage by serving thee?' I replied: 'I cannot on account of the following adventure which occurred to me:

I beheld an illustrious man in a mountain region
Who had contentedly retired from the world into a cave.
Why, said I, comest thou not into the city
For once to relax the bonds of thy heart?
He replied: 'Fairy-faced maidens are there.
When clay is plentiful, elephants will stumble.'

This I said. Then we kissed each other's heads and faces and took leave of each other.

What profits it to kiss a friend's face
And at the same time to take leave of him?
Thou wouldst say that he who parts from friends is an apple.
One half of his face is red and the other yellow.

If I die not of grief on the day of separation
Reckon me not faithful in friendship.

Story 18

A man in patched garments' accompanied us in a caravan to the Hejaz and one of the Arab amirs presented him with a hundred dinars to spend upon his family but robbers of the Kufatcha tribe suddenly fell upon the caravan and robbed it clean of everything. The merchants began to wail and to cry, uttering vain shouts and lamentations.

Whether thou implorest or complainest
The robber will not return the gold again.

The dervish alone had not lost his equanimity and showed no change. I asked: 'Perhaps they have not taken thy money?' He replied: 'Yes, they have but I was not so much accustomed to that money that separation therefrom could grieve my heart':

The heart must not be tied to any thing or person
Because to take off the heart is a difficult affair.

I replied: 'What thou hast said resembles my case because, when I was young, my intimacy with a

young man and my friendship for him were such that his beauty was the Qiblah of my eye and the chief joy of my life union with him':

Perhaps an angel in heaven but no mortal
Can be on earth equal in beauty of form to him.
I swear by the amity, after which companionship is illicit,
No human sperm will ever become a man like him.

All of a sudden the foot of his life sank into the mire of non-existence. The smoke of separation arose from his family. I kept him company on his grave for many days and one of my compositions on his loss is as follows:

Would that on the day when the thorn of fate entered thy foot
The hand of heaven had struck a sword on my head;
So that this day my eye could not see the world without thee.
Here I am on thy grave, would that it were over my head.

He who could take neither rest nor sleep
Before he had first scattered roses and narcissi.
The turns of heaven have strewn the roses of his face.
Thorns and brambles are growing on his tomb.

After separation from him I resolved and firmly determined to fold up the carpet of pleasure during the rest of my life and to retire from mixing in society:

Last night I strutted about like a peacock in the garden of union
But today, through separation from my friend, I twist my head like a snake.
The profit of the sea would be good if there were no fear of waves.
The company of the rose would be sweet if there were no pain from thorns.

Story 19

A king of the Arabs, having been informed of the relations subsisting between Laila and Mejnun, with an account of the latter's insanity, to the effect that he had in spite of his great accomplishments and eloquence, chosen to roam about in the desert and to let go the reins of self-control from his hands; he ordered him to be brought to his presence, and this having been done, he began to reprove him and to ask him what defect he had discovered in the nobility of the human soul that he adopted the habits of beasts and abandoned the society of mankind. Mejnun replied:

'Many friends have blamed me for loving her.
Will they not see her one day and understand my excuse?'

Would that those who are reproving me
Could see thy face, O ravisher of hearts,
That instead of a lemon in thy presence
They might heedlessly cut their hands.

That the truth may bear witness to the assertion: This is he for whose sake ye blamed me.

The king expressed a wish to see the beauty of Laila in order to ascertain the cause of so much distress. Accordingly he ordered her to be searched for. The encampments of various Arab families having been visited, she was found, conveyed to the king and led into the courtyard of the palace. The king looked at her outward form for some time and she appeared despicable in his sight because the meanest handmaids of his harem excelled her in beauty and attractions. Mejnun, who shrewdly understood the thoughts of the king, said: 'It would have been necessary to look from the window of Mejnun's eye at the beauty of Laila when the mystery of her aspect would have been revealed to thee.'

If the record of the glade which entered my ears
Had been heard by the leaves of the glade they would have lamented with me.
O company of friends, say to him who is unconcerned
'Would that thou knewest what is in a pining heart

Who are healthy have no pain from wounds.
I shall tell my grief to no one but a sympathizer.
It is useless to speak of bees to one
Who never in his life felt their sting.
As long as thy state is not like mine
My state will be but an idle tale to thee.

Story 20

It is related that the qazi of Hamdan, having conceived affection towards a farrier-boy and the horseshoe of his heart being on fire, he sought for some time to meet him, roaming about and seeking for opportunities, according to the saying of chroniclers:

That straight tall cypress my eyes beheld
It robbed me of my heart and threw me down.
Those wanton eyes have taken my heart with a lasso.
If thou desirest to preserve thy heart shut thy eyes.

I was informed that the boy, who had heard something of the qazi's passion, happening to meet him in a thoroughfare, manifested immense wrath, assailed the qazi with disrespectful and insulting words, snatched up a stone and left no injury untried. The qazi said to an ullemma of repute who happened to be of the same opinion with him:

'Look at that sweetheart and his getting angry,
And that bitter knot of his sweet eyebrow.'

The Arab says: 'A slap from a lover is a raisin.

A blow from the hand on the mouth
Is sweeter than eating bread with one's own hand.

In the same way the boy's impudence might be indicating kindness as padshahs utter hard words whilst they secretly wish for peace:

Grapes yet unripe are sour.
Wait two or three days, they will become sweet.

After saying these words he returned to his court of justice, where some respectable men connected with him kissed the ground of service and said: 'With thy permission we shall, doing obeisance, speak some words to thee although they may be contrary to politeness because illustrious men have said:

It is not permissible to argue on every topic.
To find fault with great men is wrong.

'But as in consequence of favours conferred by thy lordship in former times upon thy servants it would be a kind of treachery to withhold the opinion they entertain, they inform thee that the proper way is not to yield to thy inclinations concerning this boy but to fold up the carpet of lascivious desires because thy dignity as qazi is high and must not be polluted by a base crime. The companion thou hast seen is this, and our words thou hast heard are these:

One who has done many disreputable things
Cares nothing for the reputation of anyone.
Many a good name of fifty years
Was trodden under foot by one bad name."

The qazi approved of the unanimous advice of his friends and appreciated their good opinion as well as their steadfast fidelity, saying that the view taken by his beloved friends on the arrangement of his case was perfectly right and their arguments admitting of no contradiction. Nevertheless:

Although love ceases in consequence of reproval
I heard that just men sometimes concoct falsehoods.

Blame me as much as thou listest
Because blackness cannot be washed off from a negro.

Nothing can blot out my remembrance of thee.
I am a snake with broken head and cannot turn.

These words he said and sent some persons to make inquiries about him, spending boundless money because it is said that whoever has gold in his hand possesses strength of arm and he who has no worldly goods has no friends in the whole world:

Whoever has seen gold droops his head,
Although he may be hard to bend like iron-backed scales.

In short, one night he obtained privacy but during that night the police obtained information that the qazi is spending the whole of it with wine in his hand and a sweetheart on his bosom, enjoying himself, not sleeping, and singing:

Has this cock perhaps not crowed at the proper time this night
And have the lovers not had their fill of embrace, and kiss
Whilst alas for only a moment the eye of confusion is asleep?

Remain awake that life may not elapse in vain
Till thou hearest the morning call from the Friday-mosque
Or the noise of kettle-drums on Atabek's palace-gate.
Lips against lips like the cock's eye
Are not to part at the crowing of a silly cock.

Whilst the qazi was in this state one of his dependants entered and said: 'Arise and run as far as thy feet will carry thee because the envious have not only obtained a handle for vexation but have spoken the truth. We may, whilst the fire of confusion is yet burning low, perchance extinguish it with the water of stratagem but when it blazes up high it may destroy a world.' The qazi, however, replied:

'When the lion has his claws on the game
What boots it if a jackal makes his appearance?
Keep thy face on the face of the friend and leave
The foe to chew the back of his own hand in rage.'

The same night information was also brought to the king that in his realm such a wickedness had been perpetrated and he was asked what he thought of it. He replied: 'I know that he is one of the most learned men, and I account him to be the paragon of our age. As it is possible that enemies have devised a plot against him, I give no credit to this accusation unless I obtain ocular evidence because philosophers have said:

He who grasps the sword in haste
Will repenting carry the back of his hand to his teeth and bite it.'

I heard that at dawn the king with some of his courtiers arrived at the pillow of the qazi, saw a lamp standing, the sweetheart sitting, the wine spilled, the goblet broken and the qazi plunged in the sleep of drunkenness, unaware of the realm of existence. The king awakened him gently and said: 'Get up for the sun has risen.' The qazi, who perceived the state of affairs, asked: 'From what direction?' The sultan was astonished and replied: 'From the east as usual.' The qazi exclaimed: 'Praise be to Allah! The door of repentance is yet open because according to tradition the gate Of repentance will not be locked against worshippers till the sun rises in its setting place.'

These two things impelled me to sin:
My ill-luck and my imperfect understanding.
If thou givest me punishment I deserve it
And if thou forgivest pardon is better than revenge.

The king replied: 'As thou knowest that thou must suffer capital punishment, it is of no use to repent. But their faith availed them not after they had beholden our vengeance.

'What is the use to promise to forego thieving
When a lasso cannot be thrown up to the palace?
Say to the tall man: "Do not pluck the fruit",
For he who is short cannot reach the branch.

'For thee, who hast committed such wickedness, there is no way of escape.' After the king had uttered these words, the men appointed for the execution took hold of him, whereon he said: 'I have one word

more to speak in the service of the sultan.' The king, who heard him, asked: 'What is it?' And he recited:

'Thou who shakest the sleeve of displeasure upon me
Expect not that I shall withdraw my hand from thy skirt.
If escape be impossible from this crime which I committed
I trust to the clemency which thou possessest.'

The king replied: 'Thou hast adduced this wonderful sally and hast enounced a strange maxim but it is impossible according to reason and contrary to usage that thy accomplishments and eloquence should this day save thee from the punishment which I have decreed; and I consider it proper to throw thee headlong from the castle that others may take an example.' He continued: 'O lord of the world, I have been nourished by the bounty of this dynasty, and this crime was not committed only by me in the world. Throw another man headlong that I may take the example.' The king burst out laughing, pardoned his crime and said to his dependents who desired the qazi to be slain:

'Everyone of you who are bearers of your own faults
Ought not to blame others for their defects.'

Story 21

A virtuous and beauteous youth
Was pledged to a chaste maiden.
I read that in the great sea
They fell into a vortex together.
When a sailor came to take his hand,
Lest he might die in that condition,
He said in anguish from the waves:
'Leave me. Take the hand of my love.'
Whilst saying this, he despaired of life.
In his agony he was heard to exclaim:
'Learn not the tale of love from the wretch
Who forgets his beloved in distress.'
Thus the lives of the lovers terminated.
Learn from what has occurred that thou mayest know
Because Sa'di is of the ways and means of love affairs
Well aware in the Arabian city of Baghdad.
Tie thy heart to the heart-charmer thou possessest
And shut thy eye to all the rest of the world.
If Mejnun and Laila were to come to life again
They might indite a tale of love on this occurrence.

Chapter VI

On Weakness and Old Age

Story 1

I was holding a disputation with a company of learned men in the cathedral mosque of Damascus when a youth stepped among us, asking whether anyone knew Persian, whereon most of them pointed to me. I asked him what the matter was and he said that an old man, aged one hundred and fifty years, was in the agony of death but saying something in Persian which nobody could understand and that if I were kindly to go and see him I might obtain the information whether he was perhaps desirous of making his last will. When I approached his pillow, he said:

'A while ago I said I shall take some rest
But alas, the way of my breath is choked.
Alas, that from the variegated banquet of life
We were eating a while and told it is enough.'

I interpreted these words in the Arabic language to the Damascenes and they were astonished that despite of his long life he regretted the termination of it so much. I asked him how he felt and he replied: 'What shall I say?'

Hast thou not seen what misery he feels,
The teeth of whose mouth are being extracted?
Consider what his state will be at the hour
When life, so precious to him, abandons his body.

I told him not to worry his imagination with the idea of death and not to allow a hallucination to obtain dominion over his nature because Ionian philosophers have said that although the constitution may be good no reliance is to be placed on its permanence and although a malady may be perilous it does not imply a full indication of death. I asked: 'If thou art willing, I shall call a physician to treat thee?' He lifted his eyes and said, smiling:

'The skilled doctor strikes his hands together
On beholding a rival prostrate like a potsherd.
A gentleman is engaged in adorning his hall with paintings
Whilst the very foundation of the house is ruined.

An aged man was lamenting in his last agony
Whilst his old spouse was rubbing him with sandal.
When the equilibrium of the constitution is destroyed
Neither incantations nor medicines are of any avail.'

Story 2

It is related that an old man, having married a girl, was sitting with her privately in an apartment

adorned with roses, fixing his eyes and heart upon her. He did not sleep during long nights but spent them in telling her jokes and witty stories, hoping to gain her affection and to conquer her shyness. One night, however, he informed her that luck had been friendly to her and the eye of fortune awake because she had become the companion of an old man who is ripe, educated, experienced in the world, of a quiet disposition, who had felt cold and warm, had tried good and bad, who knows the diities of companionship, is ready to fulfil the conditions of love, is benevolent, kind, good-natured and sweet-tongued.

As far as I am able I shall hold thy heart
And if injured I shall not injure in return.
Though sugar may be thy food as of a parrot
I shall sacrifice sweet life to thy support.

Thou hast not fallen into the hands of a giddy youth, fun of whims, headstrong, fickle minded, running about every moment in search of another pleasure and entertaining another opinion, sleeping every night in another place and taking every day another friend.

Young men are joyous and of handsome countenance
But inconstant in fidelity to anyone.
Expect not faithfulness from nightingales
Who sing every moment to another rose.

Contrary to aged men who spend their lives according to wisdom and propriety; not according to the impulses of folly and youth.

Find one better than thyself and consider it fortunate
Because with one like thyself thou wilt be disappointed.

The old man said: 'I continued in this strain, thinking that I had captivated her heart and that it had become my prey.' She drew, however, a deep sigh from her grief-filled heart and said: 'All the words thou hast uttered, weighed in the scales of my understanding, are not equivalent to the maxim I once heard enounced in my tribe: An arrow in the side of a young woman is better than an old man.'

When she perceived in the hands of her husband
Something pendant like the nether lip of a fasting man,
She said: 'This fellow has a corpse with him
But incantations are for sleepers not for corpses.'

A woman who arises without satisfaction from a man
Will raise many a quarrel and contention.
An old man who is unable to rise from his place,
Except by the aid of a stick, how can his own stick rise?

In short, there being no possibility of harmony, a separation at last took place. When the time of the lady's uddat had terminated, she was given in marriage to a young man who was violent, ill-humoured and empty-handed. She suffered much from his bad temper and tyrannical behaviour, and experienced the miseries of penury. She nevertheless said: 'Praise be to Allah for having been delivered from that wretched torment, and attained this permanent blessing.'

Despite of all this violence and hasty nature
I shall try to please thee because thou art beauteous.
To be with thee in hell burning is for me
Better than to be with the other in paradise.
The smell of an onion from the mouth of a pretty face
Is indeed better than a rose from an ugly hand.
A nice face and a gown of gold brocade,
Essence of roses, fragrant aloes, paint, perfume and lust:
All these are ornaments of women.
Take a man; and his testicles are a sufficient ornament.

Story 3

I was in Diarbekr, the guest of an old man, who possessed abundant wealth and a beautiful son. One night he narrated to me that he had all his life no other son but this boy, telling me that in the locality people resorted to a certain tree in a valley to offer petitions and that he had during many nights prayed at the foot of the said tree, till the Almighty granted him this son. I overheard the boy whispering to his companion: 'How good it would be if I knew where that tree is that I might pray for my father to die.' Moral: The gentleman is delighted that his son is intelligent and the boy complains that his father is a dotard.

Years elapse without thy visiting
The tomb of thy father.
What good hast thou done to him
To expect the same from thy son?

Story 4

One day, in the pride of youth, I had travelled hard and arrived perfectly exhausted in the evening at the foot of an acclivity. A weak old man, who had likewise been following the caravan, came and asked me why I was sleeping, this not being the place for it. I replied: 'How am I to travel, having lost the use of my feet?' He said: 'Hast thou not heard that it is better to walk gently and to halt now and then than to run and to become exhausted?'

O thou who desirest to reach the station
Take my advice and learn patience.
An Arab horse gallops twice in a race.
A camel ambles gently night and day.

Story 5

The active, graceful, smiling, sweet-tongued youth happened once to be in the circle of our assembly. His heart had been entered by no kind of grief and his lips were scarcely ever closed from laughter. After some time had elapsed, I accidentally met him again and I learned that he had married a wife and begotten children but I saw that the root of merriment had been cut and the roses of his countenance were withered. I asked him how he felt and what his circumstances were. He replied: 'When I had obtained children I left off childishness.'

Where is youth when age has changed my ringlets?
And the change of time is a sufficient monitor.

When thou art old abstain from puerility.
Leave play and jokes to youths.

Seek not a youth's hilarity in an old man
For the water gone from the brook returns no more.
When the harvest-time of a field arrives
It will no longer wave in the breeze like a young crop.

The period of youth has departed.
Alas, for those heart-enchanting times.
The force of the lion's claws is gone.
Now we are satisfied with cheese Eke a leopard.

An old hag had dyed her hair black.
I said to her: 'O little mother of ancient days,
Thou hast cunningly dyed thy hair but consider
That thy bent back will never be straight.'

Story 6

In the folly of youth I one day shouted at my mother who then sat down with a grieved heart in a corner and said, weeping: 'Hast thou forgotten thy infancy that thou art harsh towards me?'

How sweetly said the old woman to her son
When she saw him overthrow a tiger, and elephant-bodied:
'If thou hadst remembered the time of thy infancy
How helpless thou wast in my arms
Thou would'st this day not have been harsh
For thou art a lion-like man, and I an old woman.'

Story 7

The son of a wealthy but avaricious old man, having fallen sick, his well-wishers advised him that it would be proper to get the whole Quran recited or else to offer a sacrifice. He meditated a while and then said: 'It is preferable to read the Quran because the flock is at a distance.' A holy man, who had heard this, afterwards remarked: 'He selected the reading of the Quran because it is at the tip of the tongue but the money at the bottom of the heart.'

It is useful to bend the neck in prayers
If they are to be accompanied by almsgiving.
For one dinar he would remain sticking in mud like an ass,
But if thou askest for Alhamdu he will recite it a hundred times.

Story 8

An old man, having been asked why he did not marry, replied that he could not be happy with an aged woman, and on being told that as he was a man of property, he might take a young one, he said: 'I being an old man and unwilling to associate with an old woman, how could a young one conceive friendship for me who am aged?'

Let not a man of seventy years make love.
Thou art confessedly blind, kiss her and sleep.
The lady wants strength, not gold.
One passage is preferable to her than ten mann of flesh.

Story 9

I have heard that in these days a decrepit aged man
Took the fancy in his old head to get a spouse.
He married a beauteous little girl, Jewel by name,
When he had concealed his casket of jewels from the eyes of men
A spectacle took place as is customary in weddings.
But in the first onslaught the organ of the sheikh fell asleep.
He spanned the bow but hit not the target; it being
impossible to sew
A tight coarse robe except with a needle of steel.
He complained to his friends and showed proofs
That his furniture had been utterly destroyed by her impudence.
Such fighting and contention arose between man and wife
That the affair came before the qazi; and Sa'di said:
'After all this reproach and villainy the fault is not the girl's.
Thou whose hand trembles, how canst thou bore a Jewel?'

Chapter VII

On the Effects of Education

Story 1

A vezier who had a stupid son gave him in charge of a scholar to instruct him and if possible to make him intelligent. Having been some time under instruction but ineffectually, the learned man sent one to his father with the words: 'The boy is not becoming intelligent and has made a fool of me.'

When a nature is originally receptive
Instruction will take effect thereon.
No kind of polishing will improve iron
Whose essence is originally bad.
Wash a dog in the seven oceans,
He will be only dirtier when he gets wet.
If the ass of Jesus be taken to Mekkah
He will on his return still be an ass.
Story 2

A sage, instructing boys, said to them: 'O darlings of your fathers, learn a trade because property and riches of the world are not to be relied upon; also silver and gold are an occasion of danger because either a thief may steal them at once or the owner spend them gradually; but a profession is a living fountain and permanent wealth; and although a professional man may lose riches, it does not matter because a profession is itself wealth and wherever he goes he will enjoy respect and sit in high places, whereas he who has no trade will glean crumbs and see hardships:

It is difficult to obey after losing dignity
And to bear violence from men after being caressed.

Once confusion arose in Damascus.
Everyone left his snug corner.
Learned sons of peasants
Became the veziers of padshahs.
Imbecile sons of the veziers
Went as mendicants to peasants.

If you wanted thy father's inheritance, acquire his knowledge
Because this property of his may be spent in ten days.

Story 3

An illustrious scholar, who was the tutor of a royal prince, had the habit of striking him unceremoniously and treating him severely. The boy, who could no longer bear this violence, went to his father to complain and when he had taken off his coat, the father's heart was moved with pity. Accordingly he called for the tutor and said: 'Thou dost not permit thyself to indulge in so much

cruelty towards the children of my subjects as thou inflictest upon my son. What is the reason?' He replied: 'It is incumbent upon all persons in general to converse in a sedate manner and to behave in a laudable way but more especially upon padshahs because whatever they say or do is commented on by everybody, the utterances or acts of common people being of no such consequence.

'If a hundred unworthy things are committed by a dervish
His companions do not know one in a hundred.
But if a padshah utters only one jest
It is borne from country to country.

'It is the duty of a royal prince's tutor to train up the sons of his lord in refinement of morals-and Allah caused her to grow up as a beautiful plant-more diligently than the sons of common people.'

He whom thou hast not punished when a child
Will not prosper when he becomes a man.
While a stick is green, thou canst bend it as thou listest.
When it is dry, fire alone can make it straight.

The king, being pleased with the appropriate discipline of the tutor and with his explanatory reply, bestowed upon him a robe of honour with other gifts and raised him to a higher position.

Story 4

I saw a schoolmaster in the Maghrib country, who was sour-faced, of uncouth speech, ill-humoured, troublesome to the people, of a beggarly nature and without self-restraint, so that the very sight of him disgusted the Musalmans and when reading the Quran he distressed the hearts of the people. A number of innocent boys and little maidens suffered from the hand of his tyranny, venturing neither to laugh nor to speak because he would slap the silver-cheeks of some and put the crystal legs of others into the stocks. In short, I heard that when his behaviour had attained some notoriety, he was expelled from the school and another installed as corrector, who happened to be a religious, meek, good and wise man. He spoke only when necessary and found no occasion to deal harshly with anyone so that the children lost the fear they had entertained for their first master and, taking advantage of the angelic manners of the second, they acted like demons towards each other and, trusting in his gentleness, neglected their studies, spending most of their time in play, and breaking on the heads of each other the tablets' of their unfinished tasks.

If the schoolmaster happens to be lenient
The children will play leapfrog in the bazar.

Two weeks afterwards I happened to pass near that same mosque where I again saw the first master whom the people had made glad by reconciliation and had reinstalled in his post. I was displeased, exclaimed 'La haul', and asked why they had again made Iblis the teacher of angels. An old man, experienced in the world, who had heard me, smiled and said: 'Hast thou not heard the maxim?

A padshah placed his son in a school,
Putting in his lap a silver tablet
With this inscription in golden letters:
The severity of a teacher is better than the love of a father.'

Story 5

The son of a pious man inherited great wealth left him by some uncles, whereon he plunged into dissipation and profligacy, became a spendthrift and, in short, left no heinous transgression unperpetrated and no intoxicant untasted. I advised him and said: 'My son, income is a flowing water and expense a turning mill; that is to say, only he who has a fixed revenue is entitled to indulge in abundant expenses.

'If thou hast no income, spend but frugally
Because the sailors chant this song:
"If there be no rain in the mountains
The bed of the Tigris will be dry in one year."

'Follow wisdom and propriety, abandon play and sport because thy wealth will be exhausted, whereon thou wilt fall into trouble and will repent.' The youth was prevented by the delights of the flute and of drink from accepting my admonition but found fault therewith, saying that it is contrary to the opinion of intelligent men to embitter present tranquillity by cares concerning the future:

Why should possessors of enjoyment and luck
Bear sorrow for fear of distress?
Go, be merry, my heart-rejoicing friend.
The pain of tomorrow must not be eaten today.

And how could I restrain myself, who am occupying the highest seat of liberality, have bound the knot of generosity and the fame of whose beneficence has become the topic of general conversation?

Who has become known for his liberality and generosity
Must not put a lock upon his dirhems.
When the name of a good fellow has spread in a locality
The door cannot be dosed against it.

When I perceived that he did not accept my advice and that my warm breath was not taking effect upon his cold iron, I left off admonishing him and turned away my face from his companionship, acting according to the words of philosophers, who said: Impart to them what thou hast and if they receive it not, it is not thy fault.

Although thou knowest thou wilt not be heard, say
Whatever thou knowest of good wishes and advice.
It may soon happen that thou wilt behold a silly fellow
With both his feet fallen into captivity,
Striking his hands together, and saying: 'Alas,
I have not listened to the advice of a scholar.'

After some time I saw the consequences of his dissolute behaviour-which I apprehended-realized. When I beheld him sewing patch upon patch and gathering crumb after crumb, my heart was moved with pity for his destitute condition, in which I did not consider it humane to scratch his internal wounds with reproaches or to sprinkle salt upon them. Accordingly, I said to myself:

A foolish fellow in the height of intoxication
Cares not for the coming day of distress.
The tree which sheds its foliage in spring
Will certainly have no leaves remaining in winter.

Story 6

A padshah entrusted a tutor with the care of his son, saying: 'This is thy son. Educate him as if he were one of thy own children.' He kept the prince for some years and strove to instruct him but could effect nothing, whilst the sons of the tutor made the greatest progress in accomplishments and eloquence. The king reproved and threatened the learned man with punishment, telling him that he had acted contrary to his promise and had been unfaithful. He replied: 'O king, the instruction is the same but the natures are different.'

Although both silver and gold come from stones
All stones do not contain silver and gold.
Canopus is shining upon the whole world
But produces in some places sack-leather and in others adim.

Story 7

I heard a pir-instructor say to his murid: 'The mind of man is so much occupied with thoughts about maintenance that he would surpass the position of angels if he were to devote as many of them to the giver of maintenance.'

Yazed has not forgotten thee at the time
When thou wast sperm, buried, insensible.
He gave thee a soul, nature, intellect and perception,
Beauty, speech, opinion, meditation and acuteness.
He arranged five fingers on thy fist.
He fixed two arms to thy shoulders.
O thou whose aspirations are base, thinkest he will now
Forget to provide thee with a maintenance?

Story 8

I saw an Arab of the desert who said to his boy: 'O son, on the day of resurrection thou wilt be asked what thou hast gained and not from whom thou art descended, that is to say, thou wilt be asked what thy merit is and not who thy father was.'

The covering of the Ka'bah which is kissed
Has not been ennobled by the silkworm.
It was some days in company with a venerable man
Wherefore it became respected like himself.

Story 9

It is narrated in the compositions of philosophers that scorpions are not born in the same manner like other living beings but that they devour the bowels of their mother and, after gnawing through the belly, betake themselves to the desert. The skins which may be seen in the nests of scorpions are the evidence of this. I narrated this story to an illustrious man who then told me that his own heart bore witness to the truth of it for the case could not be otherwise inasmuch as they, having in their infancy dealt thus with their fathers and mothers, they were beloved and respected in the same manner when they grow old.

A father thus admonished his son:
O noble fellow, remember this advice.
'Whoever is not faithful to his origin
Will not become the companion of happiness.'

A scorpion, having been asked why he did not go out in winter, replied: 'What honour do I enjoy in summer that I should come out also in winter?'

Story 10

The wife of a dervish had become enceinte and when the time of her confinement was at hand, the dervish who had no child during all his life said: 'If God the most high and glorious presents me with a son, I shall bestow everything I possess as alms upon dervishes, except this patched garment of mine which I am wearing.' It happened that the infant was a son. He rejoiced and gave a banquet to the dervishes, as he had promised. Some years afterwards when I returned from a journey to Syria, I passed near the locality of the dervish and asked about his circumstances but was told that he had been put in prison by the police. Asking for the cause, I was told that his son, having become drunk, quarrelled and having shed the blood of a man, had fled; whereon his father was instead of him loaded with a chain on his neck and heavy fetters on his legs. I replied: 'He had himself asked God the most high and glorious for this calamity.'

If pregnant women, O man of intellect,
Bring forth serpents at the time of birth,
It is better in the opinion of the wise
Than to give birth to a wicked progeny.

Story 11

When I was a child I asked an illustrious man about puberty. He replied: 'It is recorded in books that it has three signs. First, the age of fifteen years; secondly nocturnal pollutions; and thirdly, sprouting of hair on the pudenda; but in reality there is only one sign which is sufficient that thou shouldst seek the approbation of the most high and glorious rather than to be in the bondage of sensual pleasures; and whoever does not entertain this disposition is by erudite men considered not to have attained puberty.'

The form of man was attained by a drop of water
Which remained forty days in the womb.
If in forty years it has not attained sense and propriety
It can in reality not be called a man.
Virility consists in liberality and amiableness.
Think not that it is only in the material figure.

Virtue is necessary because the form may be painted
In halls with vermilion or verdigris.
If a man possesses not excellence and goodness
What is the difference between him and a picture on the wall?
It is no virtue to gain the whole world.
Gain the heart of one person if thou canst.

Story 12

One year discord had arisen in a caravan among the walking portion and I also travelled on foot. To obtain justice we attacked each other's heads and faces, giving full vent to pugnacity and contention. I saw a man sitting in a camel litter and saying to his companion: 'How wonderful! A pawn of ivory travels across the chess-board and becomes a farzin, and the footmen of the Haj travelled across the whole desert only to become worse.'

Tell on my part to the man-biting Haji
Who tears the skins of people with torments:
Thou art not a Haji but a camel is one
Because, poor brute, it feeds on thorns and bears loads.

Story 13

An Indian who was learning how to throw naphtha was thus reproved by a sage: 'This is not a play for thee whose house is made of reeds.'

Speak not unless thou knowest it is perfectly proper
And ask not what thou knowest will not elicit a good reply.

Story 14

A little man with a pain in his eyes went to a farrier to be treated by him. The farrier applied to his eyes what he used to put in those of quadrupeds so that the man became blind and lodged a complaint with the judge who, however, refrained from punishing the farrier, saying: 'Had this man not been an ass, he would not have gone to a farrier.' The moral of this story is to let thee know that whoever entrusts an inexperienced man with an important business and afterwards repents is by intelligent persons held to suffer from levity of intellect.

A shrewd and enlightened man will not give
Affairs of importance to a base fellow to transact.
A mat-maker although employed in weaving
Is not set to work in a silk-factory.

Story 15

An illustrious man had a worthy son who died. Being asked what he desired to be written upon the sarcophagus of the tomb, he replied: 'The verses of the glorious book' are deserving of more honour than to be written on such a spot, where they would be injured by the lapse of time, would be walked upon by persons passing by and urinated upon by dogs. If anything is necessarily to be written, let

what follows suffice:

Wah! How-every time the plants in the garden
Sprouted-glad became my heart.
Pass by, O friend, that in the spring
Thou mayest see plants sprouting from my loam.'

Story 16

A pious man happened to pass near a rich fellow who had a slave and was just chastising him after having tied his feet and hands. He said: 'My son, God the most high and glorious has given a creature like thyself into thy power and has bestowed upon thee superiority over him. Give thanks to the Almighty and do not indulge in so much violence towards the man because it is not meet that in the morn of resurrection he should be better than thyself and put thee to shame.'

Be not much incensed against a slave.
Oppress him not, grieve not his heart.
Thou hast purchased him for ten dirhems
And hast not after all created him by thy power.
How long is this command, pride and power to last?
There is a Master more exalted than thou.
O thou owner of Arslan and of Aghosh,
Do not forget him who is thy commander.

There is a tradition that the prince of the world, upon whom be the benediction of Allah and peace, has said: 'It will occasion the greatest sorrow on the day of resurrection when a pious worshipper is conveyed to paradise and a lord of profligacy to hell.'

Upon the slave subject to thy service
Vent not boundless anger but treat him gently
Because on the day of reckoning it will be a shame
To see the slave free and his owner in chains.

Story 17

One year I travelled from Balkh with Damascenes and the road being full of danger on account of robbers, a young man accompanied us as an escort. He was expert with the shield and the bow, handled every weapon and so strong that ten men were not able to span his bow-string. Moreover the athletes of the face of the earth could not bend his back down to the ground. He was, however, rich, brought up in the shade, without experience in the world, the drum-sounds of warriors never having reached his ears nor the lightning of the swords of horsemen dazzled his eyes.

He had not fallen prisoner into the hands of a foe.
No shower of arrows had rained around him.

I happened to be running together with this youth, who threw down by the force of his arm every wall that came in his way, and pulled up by the strength of his fist every big tree he saw, exclaiming, boastingly:

Where is the elephant that he may see the shoulders of the heroes?
Where is the lion that he may see the fists of men?

On that occasion two Indians showed their heads from behind a rock, desirous to attack us. One of them had a club in his hand whilst the other showed a sling under his arm. I asked our youth what he was waiting for.

Show what thou hast of bravery and strength
For here is the foe, coming on his own feet to the grave.

I saw the arrow and bow falling from the hands of the young man and his bones trembling:

Not everyone who splits a hair with a cuirass-piercing arrow
Can, on the day of attack by warriors, extricate his feet.

We saw no other remedy but to abandon our baggage, arms and clothes, whereby we saved our lives.

Employ an experienced man in important affairs
Who is able to ensnare a fierce lion with his lasso.
A youth, though he may have a strong arm and elephant-body,
His joints will snap asunder for fear in contact with a foe.
The issue of a battle is known by a tried man before the contest
Like the solution of a legal question to a learned man.

Story 18

I noticed the son of a rich man, sitting on the grave of his father and quarreling with a dervish-boy, saying: 'The sarcophagus of my father's tomb is of stone and its epitaph is elegant. The pavement is of marble, tesselated with turquois-like bricks. But what resembles thy father's grave? It consists of two contiguous bricks with two handfuls of mud thrown over it.' The dervish-boy listened to all this and then observed: 'By the time thy father is able to shake off those heavy stones which cover him, mine will have reached paradise.'

An ass with a light burden
No doubt walks easily.

A dervish who carries only the load of poverty
Will also arrive lightly burdened at the gate of death
Whilst he who lived in happiness, wealth and ease
Will undoubtedly on all these accounts die hard.
At all events, a prisoner who escapes from all his bonds
Is to be considered more happy than an amir taken prisoner.

Story 19

I asked an illustrious man for the reason of the tradition: Account as an enemy the passion which is between thy two loins. He replied: 'The reason is because whatever enemy thou propitiatest becomes

thy friend, whereas the more thou indulgest in a passion, the more it will oppose thee.'

Man attains angelic nature by eating sparingly
But if he be voracious like beasts he falls like a stone.
He whose wishes thou fulfillest will obey thy command
Contrary to passion, which will command, when obeyed.

Story 20

Contention of Sa'di with a Disputant concerning Wealth and Poverty

I saw a man in the form but not with the character of a dervish, sitting in an assembly, who had begun a quarrel; and, having opened the record of complaints, reviled wealthy men, alleging at last that the hand of power of dervishes to do good was tied and that the foot of the intention of wealthy men to do good was broken.

The liberal have no money.
The wealthy have no liberality.

I, who had been cherished by the wealth of great men, considered these words offensive and said: 'My good friend, the rich are the income of the destitute and the hoarded store of recluses, the objects of pilgrims, the refuge of travellers, the bearers of heavy loads for the relief of others. They give repasts and partake of them to feed their dependants and servants, the surplus of their liberalities being extended to widows, aged persons, relatives and neighbours.'

The rich must spend for pious uses, vows and hospitality,
Tithes, offerings, manumissions, gifts and sacrifices.
How canst thou attain their power of doing good who art able
To perform only the prayer-flections and these with a hundred distractions?

If there be efficacy in the power to be liberal and in the ability of performing religious duties, the rich can attain it better because they possess money to give alms, their garments are pure, their reputation is guarded, their hearts are at leisure. Inasmuch as the power of obedience depends upon nice morsels and correct worship upon elegant clothes, it is evident that hungry bowels have but little strength, an empty hand can afford no liberality, shackled feet cannot walk, and no good can come from a hungry belly.

He sleeps troubled in the night
Who has no support for the morrow.
The ant collects in summer a subsistence
For spending the winter in ease.

Freedom from care and destitution are not joined together and comfort in poverty is an impossibility. A man who is rich is engaged in his evening devotions whilst another who is poor is looking for his evening meal. How can they resemble each other?

He who possesses means is engaged in worship.
Whose means are scattered, his heart is distracted.

The worship of those who are comfortable is more likely to meet with acceptance, their minds being more attentive and not distracted or scattered. Having a secure income, they may attend to devotion. The Arab says: 'I take refuge with Allah against base poverty and neighbours whom I do not love. There is also a tradition: Poverty is blackness of face in both worlds.'

He retorted by asking me whether I had heard the Prophet's saying: Poverty is my glory. I replied: 'Hush! The prince of the world alluded to the poverty of warriors in the battlefield of acquiescence and of submission to the arrow of destiny; not to those who don the patched garb of righteousness but sell the doles of food given them as alms.'

O drum of high sound and nothing within,
What wilt thou do without means when the struggle comes?
Turn away the face of greed from people if thou art a man.
Trust not the rosary of one thousand beads in thy hand.

A dervish without divine knowledge rests not until his poverty, culminates in unbelief; for poverty is almost infidelity, because a nude person cannot be clothed without money nor a prisoner liberated. How can the like of us attain their high position and how does the bestowing resemble the receiving hand? Knowest thou not that God the most high and glorious mentions in his revealed word the Pleasures of paradise-They shall have a certain provision in paradise-to inform thee that those who are occupied with cares for a subsistence are excluded from the felicity of piety and that the realm of leisure is under the ring of the certain provision.

The thirsty look in their sleep
On the whole world as a spring of water.

Wherever thou beholdest one who has experienced destitution and tasted bitterness, throwing himself wickedly into fearful adventures and not avoiding their consequences, he fears not the punishment of Yazed and does not discriminate between what is licit or illicit.

The dog whose head is touched by a clod of earth
Leaps for joy, imagining it to be a bone.
And when two men take a corpse on their shoulders,
A greedy fellow supposes it to be a table with food.

But the possessor of wealth is regarded with a favourable eye by the Almighty for the lawful acts he has done and preserved from the unlawful acts he might commit. Although I have not fully explained this matter nor adduced arguments, I rely on thy sense of justice to tell me whether thou hast ever seen a mendicant with his hands tied up to his shoulders or a poor fellow sitting in prison or a veil of innocence rent or a guilty hand amputated, except in consequence of poverty? Lion-hearted men were on account of their necessities captured in mines which they had dug to rob houses and their heels were perforated. It is also possible that a dervish, impelled by the cravings of his lust and unable to restrain it, may commit sin because the stomach and the sexual organs are twins, that is to say, they are the two children of one belly and as long as one of these is contented, the other will likewise be satisfied. I heard that a dervish had been seen committing a wicked act with a youth, and although he had been put to shame, he was also in danger of being stoned. He said: 'O Musalmans, I have no power to marry a wife and no patience to restrain myself. What am I to do? There is no monasticism

in Islam." Among the number of causes producing internal tranquility and comfort in wealthy people, the fact may be reckoned that they take every night a sweetheart in their arms and may every day contemplate a youth whose brightness excels that of the shining morn and causes the feet of walking cypresses to conceal themselves abashed.

Plunging the fist into the blood of beloved persons,
Dying the finger-tips with the colour of the jujube-fruit.

It is impossible that with his beauteous stature he should prowl around prohibited things or entertain intentions of ruin to himself.

How could he who took as booty a Huri of paradise
Take any notice of the benes of Yaghma?

Who has before him fresh dates which he loves
Has no need to throw stones on clusters upon trees.

Mostly empty handed persons pollute the skirt of modesty by transgression, and those who are hungry steal bread.

When a ferocious dog has found meat
He asks not whether it is of the camel of Saleh or the ass of Dujjal.

What a number of modest women have on account of poverty fallen into complete profligacy, throwing away their precious reputation to the wind of dishonour!

With hunger the power of abstinence cannot abide.
Poverty snatches the reins from the hands of piety.

Whilst I was uttering these words, the dervish lost the bridle of patience from his hands, drew forth the sword of his tongue, caused the steed of eloquence to caper in the plain of reproach and said: 'Thou hast been so profuse in this panegyric of wealthy men and hast talked so much nonsense that they might be supposed to be the antidote to poverty or the key to the storehouse of provisions; whereas they are a handful of proud, arrogant, conceited and abominable fellows intent upon accumulating property and money and so thirsting for dignity and abundance, that they do not speak to poor people except with insolence, and look upon them with contempt. They consider scholars to be mendicants and insult poor men on account of the wealth which they themselves possess and the glory of dignity which they imagine is inherent in them. They sit in the highest places and believe they are better than anyone else. They never show kindness to anybody and are ignorant of the maxim of sages that he who is inferior to others in piety but superior in riches is outwardly powerful but in reality a destitute man.

If a wretch on account of his wealth is proud to a sage
Consider him to be the podex of an ass, though he may be a perfumed ox.'

I said: 'Do not think it allowable to insult them for they are possessors of generosity.' He rejoined: 'Thou art mistaken. They are slaves of money. Of what use is it that they are like bulky clouds and rain not, like the fountain of light, the sun, and shine upon no one? They are mounted on the steed of

ability but do not use it; they would not stir a step for God's sake nor spend one dirhem without imposing obligation and insult. They accumulate property with difficulty, guard it with meanness and abandon it with reluctance, according to the saying of illustrious men that the silver of an avaricious man will come up from the ground when he goes into the ground.

One man gathers wealth with trouble and labour
And if another comes, he takes it without either.'

I retorted: 'Thou hast not become aware of the parsimony of wealthy men except by reason of mendicancy or else, to him who has laid aside covetousness, a liberal and an avaricious man would appear to be the same. The touchstone knows what gold is and the beggar knows him who is stingy.' He rejoined: 'I am speaking from experience when I say that they station rude and insolent men at their gates to keep off worthy persons, to place violent hands upon men of piety and discretion, saying: "Nobody is here", and verily they have spoken the truth.'

Of him who has no sense, intention, plan or opinion,
The gatekeeper has beautifully said: 'No one is in the house.'

I said this is excusable because they are teased out of their lives by people expecting favours and driven to lamentation by petitions of mendicants; it being according to common sense an impossibility to satisfy beggars even if the sand of the desert were to be transmuted into pearls.

The eye of greediness, the wealthy of the world
Can no more fill than dew can replenish a well.

Hatim Tai dwelt in the desert; had he been in a town he would have been helpless against the assaults of beggars and they would have torn to pieces his upper garments as it is recorded in the Tayibat:

Look not at me that others may not conceive hopes
Because there is no reward to be got from beggars.

He said: 'No. I take pity on their state.' I replied: 'No. Thou enviest them their wealth.' We were thus contending with each other, every pawn he put forward I endeavoured to repel, and every time he announced check to my king, I covered him with my queen until he had gambled away all his ready cash and had shot off all the arrows of his quiver in arguing.

Have a care; do not throw away the shield when attacked by an orator
Who has nothing except borrowed eloquence to show,
Practise thou religion and marifet because a Suja-speaking orator
Displays weapons at the gate but no one is in the fort.

At last no arguments remained to him and, having been defeated, he commenced to speak nonsense as is the custom of ignorant men who, when they can no more address proofs against their opponent, shake the chain of enmity like the idol-carver Azer who being unable to overcome his son in argument began to quarrel with him saying if thou forbearest not I will surely stone thee. The man insulted me. I spoke harshly to him. He tore my collar and I caught hold of his chin-case.

He falling upon me and I on him,

Crowds running after us and laughing,
The finger of astonishment of a world
On the teeth; from what was said and heard by us.

In short we carried our dispute to the qazi and agreed to abide by a just decision of the judge of Musalmans, who would investigate the affair and tell the difference between the rich and the poor. When the qazi had seen our state and heard our logic, he plunged his head into his collar and after meditating for a while spoke as follows: 'O thou, who hast lauded the wealthy and hast indulged in violent language towards dervishes, thou art to know that wherever a rose exists, there also thorns occur; that wine is followed by intoxication, that a treasure is guarded by a serpent, and that wherever royal pearls are found, men-devouring sharks must also be. The sting of death is the sequel of the delights of life and a cunning demon bars the enjoyment of paradise.

'What will the violence of a foe do if it cannot touch the seeker of the Friend?
Treasure, serpent; rose, thorn; grief and pleasure are all linked together.

'Perceivest thou not that in a garden there are musk-willows as well as withered sticks? And likewise in the crowd of the rich there are grateful and impious men, as also in the circle of dervishes some are forbearing and some are impatient.

'If every drop of dew were to become a pearl
The bazar would be full of them as of ass-shells.

'Those near to the presence of the most high and glorious are rich men with the disposition of dervishes and dervishes with the inclination of the rich. The greatest of rich men is he who sympathizes with dervishes and the best of dervishes is he who looks but little towards rich men. Who trusts in Allah, he will be his sufficient support.'

After this the qazi turned the face of reproof from me to the dervish and said: 'O thou who hast alleged that the wealthy are engaged in wickedness and intoxicated with pleasure, some certainly are of the kind thou hast described; of defective aspirations, and ungrateful for benefits received. Sometimes they accumulate and put by, eat and give not; if for instance the rain were to fail or a deluge were to distress the world, they, trusting in their own power, would not care for the misery of dervishes, would not fear God and would say:

If another perishes for want of food
I have some; what cares a duck for the deluge?

The women riding on camels in their howdahs
Take no notice of him who sinks in the sana.

The base when they have saved their own blankets
Say: What boots it if all mankind perishes?

'There are people of the kind thou hast heard of, and other persons who keep the table of beneficence spread out, the hand of liberality open, seeking a good name and pardon from God. They are the possessors of this world and of the next, like the slaves of His Majesty Padshah of the world who is aided by devine grace, conqueror, possessor of authority among nations, defender of the frontiers of

Islam, heir of the realm of Solomon, the most righteous of the kings of the period, Muzaffar-ud-dunia wa uddin Atabek Abu Bekr Ben Sa'd Ben Zanki, may Allah prolong his days and aid his banners.

'A father never shows the kindness to his son
Which the hand of thy liberality has bestowed on mankind.
God desired to vouchsafe a blessing to the world
And in his mercy made thee padshah of the world.'

When the qazi had thus far protracted his remarks and had caused the horse of his eloquence to roam beyond the limits of our expectation, we submitted to his judicial decision, condoned to each other what had passed between us, took the path of reconciliation, placed our heads on each other's feet by way of apology, kissed each other's head and face, terminating the discussion with the following two distichs:

Complain not of the turning of the spheres, O dervish,
Because thou wilt be luckless if thou diest in this frame of mind.
O wealthy man, since thy heart and hand are successful
Eat and be liberal for thou hast conquered this world and the next.

Chapter VIII

On Rules for Conduct in Life

Maxim 1

Property is for the comfort of life, not for the accumulation of wealth. A sage, having been asked who is lucky and who is not, replied: 'He is lucky who has eaten and sowed but he is unlucky who has died and not enjoyed.'

Pray not for the nobody who has done nothing,
Who spent his life in accumulating property but has not enjoyed it.

Moses, upon whom be peace, thus advised Quran: 'Do thou good as Allah has done unto thee.' But he would not listen and thou hast heard of his end:

Who has not accumulated good with dirhems and dinars
Has staked his end upon his dirhems and dinars.
If thou desirest to profit by riches of the world
Be liberal to mankind as God has been liberal to thee.

The Arab says: Be liberal without imposing obligations and verily the profit will return to thee.

Wherever the tree of beneficence has taken root
Its tallness and branches pass beyond the sky.
If thou art desirous to eat the fruit thereof
Do not put a saw to its foot by imposing obligations.

Thank God that thou hast been divinely aided
And not excluded from his gifts and bounty.
Think not thou conferrest an obligation on the sultan by serving him
But be obliged to him for having kept thee in his service.

Maxim 2

Two men took useless trouble and strove without any profit, when one of them accumulated property without enjoying it, and the other learnt without practising what he had learnt.

However much science thou mayest acquire
Thou art ignorant when there is no practice in thee.
Neither deeply learned nor a scholar will be
A quadruped loaded with some books.
What information or knowledge does the silly beast posses
Whether it is carrying a load of wood or of books?

Maxim 3

Knowledge is for the cherishing of religion, not for amassing wealth.

Who sold abstinence, knowledge and piety
Filled a granary but burnt it clean away.

Maxim 4

A learned man who is not abstinent resembles a torchbearer who guides others but does not guide himself.

Who has spent a profitless life
Bought nothing and threw away his gold.

Maxim 5

The country is adorned by intelligent and the religion by virtuous men. Padshahs stand more in need of the advice of intelligent men than intelligent men of the proximity of padshahs.

If thou wilt listen to advice, padshah,
There is none better in all books than this:
'Entrust a business to an intelligent man
Although it may not be his occupation.'

Maxim 6

Three things cannot subsist without three things: property without trade, science without controversy and a country without punishment.

Speak sometimes in a friendly, conciliatory, manly way
Perhaps thou wilt ensnare a heart with the lasso.
Sometimes speak in anger; for a hundred jars of sugar
Will on occasion not have the effect of one dose of colocynth.

Maxim 7

To have mercy upon the bad is to injure the good; to pardon tyrants is to do violence to dervishes.

If thou associatest and art friendly with a wretch
He will commit sin with thy wealth and make thee his partner.

Admonition 1

The amity of princes and the sweet voice of children are not to be trusted, because the former is changed by fancy and the latter in the course of one night.

Give not thy heart to a sweetheart of a thousand lovers,
And if thou givest it, thou givest that heart for separation.

Admonition 2

Confide not to a friend every secret thou possessest. How knowest thou that he will not some time become thy foe? Inflict not every injury thou canst upon an enemy because it is possible that one day he may become thy friend.

Admonition 3

Reveal not thy secret to any man although he may be trustworthy, because no one can keep thy secret better than thyself.

Silence is preferable than to tell thy mind

To anyone; saying what is to remain unsaid.
O simpleton, stop the source of the spring.
When it becomes full, the brook cannot be stopped.

Maxim 8

A weak foe, who professes submission and shows friendship, has no other object than to become a strong enemy. It has been said that as the friendship of friends is unreliable, what trust can be put in the flattery of enemies?

Admonition 4

Who despises an insignificant enemy resembles him who is careless about fire.

Extinguish it today, while it may be quenched,
Because when fire is high, it burns the world.
Allow not the bow to be spanned
By a foe because an arrow may pierce.

Admonition 5

Speak so between two enemies that thou mayest not be put to shame if they become friends.

Between two men contention is like fire,
The ill-starred back-biter being the wood-carrier.
When both of them become friends again
He will among them be unhappy and ashamed.
To kindle fire between two men
Is not wise but is to burn oneself therein.

Converse in whispers with thy friends
Lest thy sanguinary foe may hear thee.
Take care of what thou sayest in front of a wall
Because an ear may be behind the wall.

Admonition 6

Whoever makes peace with the enemies of his friends greatly injures his friends.

Wash thy hands, O wise man, from a friend
Who is sitting together with thy foes.

Admonition 7

When thou art uncertain in transacting an affair, select that portion of it which will entail no danger to thee.

Speak not harshly to a man of gentle speech.
Seek not to fight with him who knocks at the door of peace.

Admonition 8

As long as an affair can be arranged with gold, it is not proper to endanger life.

When the hand is foiled in every stratagem

It is licit to put the hand to the sword.

Admonition 9

Do not pity the weakness of a foe because when he gains strength he will not spare thee.

Boast not of thy moustaches when thou seest thy foe is weak.
There is marrow in every bone, a man in every coat.

Maxim 9

Whoever slays a bad fellow saves mankind from a calamity and him from the wrath of God.

Condonation is laudable but nevertheless
Apply no salve to the wound of an oppressor of the people.
He who had mercy upon a serpent
Knew not that it was an injury to the sons of Adam.

Maxim 10

It is a mistake to accept advice from an enemy but permissible to hear it; and to act contrary to it is perfectly correct.

Be cautious of what a foe tells thee to do
Lest thou strike thy knee with the hand of pain.
If he points thy way to the right like an arrow
Deflect therefrom and take that to the left hand.

Admonition 10

Wrath beyond measure produces estrangement and untimely kindness destroys authority. Be neither so harsh as to disgust the people with thee nor so mild as to embolden them.

Severity and mildness together are best
Like a bleeder who is a surgeon and also applies a salve.
A wise man uses neither severity to excess
Nor mildness; for it lessens his authority.
He neither exalts himself too much
Nor exposes himself at once to contempt.

A youth said to his father: 'O wise man,
Give me for instruction one advice like an aged person.'
He said: 'Be kind but not to such a degree
That a sharp-toothed wolf may become audacious.'

Maxim 11

May that prince never govern a kingdom
Who is not an obedient slave to God.

Admonition 11

It is incumbent upon a padshah to give way to anger towards his slaves only so far as to retain the confidence of his friends. The fire of anger first burns him who has given cause for it and afterwards the flame may or may not reach the foe.

It is not proper for sons of Adam born of earth
To inflate their heads with pride, violence and wind.
Thou who displayest so much heat and obstinacy
Must be, I think, not of earth but of fire.

I visited a hermit in the country of Bilqan
And requested him to purge me of ignorance by instruction.
He replied: 'Be patient like earth, O lawyer,
Or else, bury under the earth all thy learning.'

Maxim 12
An ill-humoured man is captive in the hands of a foe, from the grasp of whose punishment he cannot be delivered wherever he may go.

If from the hand of calamity an ill-natured man escapes into the sky
The evil disposition of his own nature retains him in calamity.

Admonition 12

When thou perceivest that discord is in the army of the foe, be thou at ease; but if they are united, be apprehensive of thy own distress.

Go and sit in repose with thy friends
When thou seest war among the enemies;
But if thou perceivest that they all agree
Span thy bow and carry stones upon the rampart.

Maxim 13

When all the artifices of an enemy have failed he shakes the chain of friendship, and thereon performs acts of friendship which no enemy is able to do.

Admonition 13

Strike the head of a serpent with the hand of a foe because one of two advantages will result. If the enemy succeeds thou hast killed the snake and if the latter, thou hast been delivered from a foe.

Advice

If thou art aware of news which will grieve a heart, remain silent that others may convey it.

Nightingale, bring tidings of spring.
Leave bad news to the owl.

Caution

Give not information to a padshah of the treachery of anyone, unless thou art sure he will accept it; else thou wilt only be preparing thy own destruction.

Prepare to speak only when
Thy words are likely to have effect.
Speech is a perfection in the soul of man
But do not ruin thyself by speaking.

Maxim 14

Whoever gives advice to a self-willed man stands himself in need of advice.

Admonition 14

Swallow not the deception of a foe. Purchase not conceit from a panegyrist. The one has laid out a snare for provisions and the other has opened the jaws of covetousness.

Maxim 15

A fool is pleased by flattery like the inflated heel of a corpse that has the appearance of fatness.

Take care not to listen to the voice of a flatterer
Who expects cheaply to derive profit from thee.
If one day thou failest to satisfy his wishes
He enumerates two hundred faults of thine.

Maxim 16

Unless an orator's defects are mentioned by someone, his good points will not be praised.

Be not proud of the beauty of thy speech,
Of the approbation of an ignoramus and of thy own opinion.

Maxim 17

Everyone thinks himself perfect in intellect and his child in beauty.

A Jew was debating with a Musalman
Till I shook with laughter at their dispute.
The Moslem said in anger: 'If this deed of mine
Is not correct, may God cause me to die a Jew.'
The Jew said: 'I swear by the Pentateuch
That if my oath is false, I shall die a Moslem like thee.'
Should from the surface of the earth wisdom disappear
Still no one will acknowledge his own ignorance.

Maxim 18

Ten men eat at a table but two dogs will contend for one piece of carrion. A greedy person will stir be hungry with the whole world, whilst a contented man will be satisfied with one bread. Wise men have said that poverty with content is better than wealth and not abundance.

Narrow intestines may be filled with dry bread
But the wealth of the surface of the world will not fill a greedy
eye.

When the term of my father's life had come to an end
He gave me this one advice and passed away:
Lust is fire, abstain therefrom,
Make not the fire of hell sharp for thee.
In that fire the burning thou wilt not be able to bear,
Quench this fire with water today.

Admonition 15

Whoever does no good in the time of ability will see distress in the time of inability.

No one is more unlucky than an oppressor of men
Because in the day of calamity no one is his friend.

Maxim 19

Life is in the keeping of a single breath and the world is an existence between two annihilations. Those who sell the religion for the world 'are asses', they sell Joseph but what do 'they buy'? Did I not command you, O sons of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan?

On the word of a foe thou hast broken faith with a friend.
See from whom thou hast cut thyself off and to whom united.

Maxim 20

Satan cannot conquer the righteous and the sultan the poor.

Lend nothing to a prayerless man
Although his mouth may gasp from penury;
Because he who neglects the commands of God
Will also not care for what he may be indebted to thee.

Maxim 21

Whatever takes place quickly is not permanent.

I have heard that eastern loam is made
In forty days into a porcelain cup.
A hundred are daily made in Baghdad.
Hence thou seest also their price is vile.

A little fowl issues from the egg and seeks food
Whilst man's progeny has no knowledge, sense or discernment.
Nevertheless the former attains nothing when grown up
Whilst the latter surpasses all beings in dignity and excellence.
Glass is everywhere, and therefore of no account,
But a ruby difficult to get, and therefore precious.

Maxim 22

Affairs succeed by patience and a hasty man fails.

I saw with my eyes in the desert
That a slow man overtook a fast one.
A galloping horse, fleet like the wind, fell back
Whilst the camel-man continued slowly his progress.

Maxim 23

Nothing is better for an ignorant man than silence, and if he were to consider it to be suitable, he would not be ignorant.

If thou possessest not the perfection of excellence
It is best to keep thy tongue within thy mouth.
Disgrace is brought on a man by his tongue.
A walnut, having no kernel, will be light.

A fool was trying to teach a donkey,
Spending all his time and efforts in the task.
A sage observed: 'O ignorant man, what sayest thou?
Fear blame from the censorious in this vain attempt.
A brute cannot learn speech from thee.
Learn thou silence from a brute.'

Who does not reflect what he is to answer
Will mostly speak improperly.
Come. Either arrange thy words like a wise man
Or remain sitting silent like a brute.

Admonition 16

Whenever a man disputes with one who is more learned than himself to make people know of his learning, they will know that he is ignorant.

If one better than thyself begins to speak,
Although thou mayest know better, contradict him not.

Maxim 24

Whoever associates with bad people will see no good.

If an angel associates with a demon
He will learn from him fear, fraud and hypocrisy.
Of the wicked thou canst learn only wickedness.
A wolf will not take to sewing jackets.

Admonition 17

Reveal not the secret faults of men because thou wilt put them to shame and wilt forfeit thy own confidence.

Maxim 25

Who acquires science and does not practise it, resembles him who possesses an ox but does not use him to plough or to sow seed.

Maxim 26

From a body without a heart obedience does not arise and a husk without a kernel is no stock in trade.

Not everyone who is brisk in dispute is correct in business.

Many a stature concealed by a sheet
If revealed appears to be the mother of one's mother.

Maxim 27

If every night were to be the night of Qadr, the night of Qadr would be without Qadr.

If all stones were rubies of Badakhshan,
The price of rubies and of stones would be the same.

Maxim 28

Not everyone who is handsome in form possesses a good character; the qualities are inside not upon the skin.

It is possible in one day to know from a man's qualities
What degree of science he has reached.
Be however not sure of his mind nor deceived.
A wicked spirit is not detected sometimes for years.

Caution 2

Who quarrels with great men sheds his own blood.

One who thinks that he is great
Is truly said to be squinting.
Thou wilt soon see thy forehead broken
If thou buttest it in play against a ram.

Maxim 29

To strike one's fist on a lion, and to grasp the sharp edge of a sword with the hand, is not the part of an intelligent man.

Do not fight or try thy strength with a furious man.
Hide thy hands in thy arm-pits to avoid his finger-nails.

Caution 3

A weak man trying to show his prowess off against a strong one only aids his foe to encompass his own destruction.

What strength has one brought up in the shade
To go against champions in a fight?
A man with weak arms in his folly throws
His fist upon a man with iron claws.

Maxim 30

Whoever does not listen to advice will have occasion to hear reproof.

If admonition enters not thy ear
Be silent when I blame thee.

Elegant saying 1

Men void of accomplishments cannot behold those who possess some, without barking like the curs of the bazar on seeing a hunting dog, but dare not come forward; that is to say, when a base fellow is unable to vie with an accomplished man he sets about slandering him according to his own wickedness.

The envious mean fellow will certainly slander,
Whose tongue of speech is dumb when face to face.

Maxim 31

If there were no craving of the stomach, no bird would enter the snare of the fowler; nay, he would not even set the snare.

Maxim 32

Sages eat slow, devotees half satisfy their appetite, recluses only eat to preserve life, youths until the dishes are removed, old men till they begin to perspire, but qalandars till no room remains in the bowels for drawing breath and no food on the table for anybody.

A slave to constipation spends two sleepless nights,
One night from repletion and another from distress.

Maxim 33

To consult women brings on ruin and to be liberal to rebellious men crime.

To have mercy on sharp-toothed tigers
Is to be tyrannical towards sheep.

Admonition 18

Who has power over his foe and does not slay him is his own enemy.

With a stone in the hand and a snake on a stone
It is folly to consider and to delay.

Others, however, enounce a contrary opinion and say that it is preferable to respite captives because the option of killing or not killing remains; but if they be slain without delay, it is possible that some advantage may be lost, the like of which cannot be again obtained.

It is quite easy to deprive a man of life.
When he is slain he cannot be resuscitaied again.
It is a condition of wisdom in the archer to be patient
Because when the arrow leaves the bow it returns no more.

Maxim 34

When a sage comes in contact with fools, he must not expect to be honoured, and if an ignorant man overcomes a sage in an oratorical contest, it is no wonder, because even a stone breaks a jewel.

What wonder is there that the song
Of a nightingale ceases when imprisoned with a crow
Or that a virtuous man under the tyranny of vagabonds
Feels affliction in his heart and is irate.
Although a base stone may break a golden vase,
The price of the stone is not enhanced nor of the gold lost.

Maxim 35

Be not astonished when a wise man ceases to speak in company of vile persons, since the melody of a harp cannot overcome the noise of a drum and the perfume of ambergris must succumb to the stench of rotten garlic.

A blatant ignoramus proudly lifted his neck
Because he had overcome a scholar by his impudence.
Knowest thou not that the Hejazi musical tune
Succumbs to the roar of the drum of war?

Maxim 36

Even after falling into mud a jewel retains its costliness, and dust, although it may rise into the sky, is as contemptible as before. Capacity without education is deplorable and education without capacity is thrown away. Ashes are of high origin because the nature of fire is superior, but as they have no value of their own, they are similar to earth and the price of sugar arises not from. the cane but from its own quality.

The land of Canaan having no natural excellence,
The birth of a prophet therein could not enhance its worth.
Display thy virtue if thou hast any, not thy origin.
The rose is the offspring of thorns and Abraham of Azer.

Maxim 37

Musk is known by its perfume and not by what the druggist says. A scholar is silent like the perfumer's casket but displays accomplishments, whilst an ignoramus is loud-voiced and intrinsically empty like a war-drum.

A learned man among blockheads
(So says the parable of our friends)
Is like a sweetheart among the blind
Or a Quran among unbelievers.

Maxim 38

A friend whom people have been cherishing during a lifetime they must not suddenly insult.

It takes a stone many a year to become a ruby.
Beware not to break it in a moment with a stone.

Maxim 39

Intellect may become captive to lust like a weak man in the hands of an artful woman.

Bid farewell to pleasure in a house
Where the shouting of a woman is loud.

Maxim 40

A design without strength to execute it is fraud and deception and application of strength without a design is ignorance and lunacy.

Discernment is necessary. Arrangement and intellect, then a realm;
For realm and wealth with an ignorant man are weapons against himself.

Maxim 41

A liberal man who eats and bestows is better than a devote who fasts and hoards.

Maxim 42

Who has renounced appetites for the sake of approbation by men has fallen from licit into illicit appetites.

A devotee who sits in a corner not for God's sake
Is helpless. What can he see in a dark mirror?

Little by little becomes much and drop by drop will be a torrent; that is to say, he who has no power gathers small stones that he may at the proper opportunity annihilate the pride of his foe.

Drop upon drop collected will make a river.
Rivers upon rivers collected will make a sea.
Little and little together will become much.
The granary is but grain upon grain.

Maxim 43

A scholar is not meekly to overlook the folly of a common person because thus both parties are injured; the dignity of the former being lessened, and the ignorance of the latter confirmed.

Speak gracefully and kindly to a low fellow,
His pride and obstinacy will augment.

Maxim 44

Transgression by whomsoever committed is blamable but more so in learned men, because learning is a weapon for combating Satan and, when the possessor of a weapon is made prisoner, his shame will be greater.

It is better to be an ignorant poor fellow
Then a learned man who is not abstemious;
Because the former loses the way by his blindness
While the latter falls into a well with both eyes open.

Maxim 45

Whose bread is not eaten by others while he is alive, he will not be remembered when he is dead. A widow knows the delight of grapes and not the lord of fruits. Joseph the just, salutation to him, never ate to satiety in the Egyptian dearth for fear he might forget the hungry people.

How can he who lives in comfort and abundance
Know what the state of the famished is?
He is aware of the condition of the poor
Who has himself fallen into a state of distress.

O thou who art riding a fleet horse, consider
That the poor thorn-carrying ass is in water and mud.
Ask not for fire from thy poor neighbour's house
Because what passes out of his window is the smoke of his heart.

Admonition 19

Ask not a dervish in poor circumstances, and in the distress of a year of famine, how he feels, unless thou art ready to apply a salve to his wound or to provide him with a maintenance.

When thou seest an ass, fallen in mud with his load,
Have mercy in thy heart and step not on his head.
But when thou hast gone and asked him how he fell,
Gird thy loins and take hold of his tail like a man.

Maxim 46

Two things are contrary to reason: to enjoy more than is decreed and to die before the time appointed.

Fate will not change by a thousand laments and sighs,
By thanks or complaints, issuing from the mouth.
The angel appointed over the treasures of wind
Cares not if the lamp of a widow dies.

Admonition 20

O thou asker of food, sit for thou wilt eat; and 0 thou asked by death, run not for thou wilt not save thy life.

Whether thou strivest for a maintenance or not
God the most high and glorious will send it to thee;
And if thou rushest into the jaw of a lion or tiger
They will not devour thee unless on the day decreed.

Maxim 47

What is not placed cannot be reached by the hand and whatever is placed will be reached wherever it is.

Hast thou heard that Alexander went into the darkness
And after all his efforts could not taste the water of immortality?

Maxim 48

A rich profligate is a lump of earth gilded and a pious dervish is a sweetheart besmeared with earth. The latter is the patched garment of Moses and the former is the bejewelled beard of Pharaoh. Nevertheless good men retain a cheerful countenance in adversity whilst the rich droop their heads even in prosperity.

Who possesses wealth and dignity but therewith
Succours not those whose minds are distressed,
Inform him that no kind of wealth and dignity
He will enjoy in the mansion of the next world.

Maxim 49

An envious man is avaricious with the wealth of God and hates the guiltless as foes.

I saw a crackbrained little man,
Reviling a possessor of dignity,

Who replied: 'O fellow, if thou art unlucky,
What guilt is there in lucky men?'

Forbear to wish evil to an envious man
Because the ill-starred fellow is an evil to himself.
What needest thou to show enmity to him
Who has such a foe on the nape of his neck?

Maxim 50

A disciple without intention is a lover without money; a traveller without knowledge is a bird without wings; a scholar without practice is a tree without fruit, and a devotee without science is a house without a door. The Quran was revealed for the acquisition of a good character, not for chanting written chapters. A pious unlettered man is like one who travels on foot, whilst a negligent scholar is like a sleeping rider. A sinner who lifts his hands in supplication is better than a devotee who keeps them proudly on his head.

A good humoured and pleasant military officer
Is superior to a theologian who injures men.

One being asked what a learned man without practice resembled, replied: 'A bee without honey.'

Say to the rude and unkind bee,
'At least forbear to sting, if thou givest no honey.'

Maxim 51

A man without virility is a woman and an avaricious devote is a highway robber.

O thou, who hast put on a white robe for a show,
To be approved of men, whilst the book of thy acts is black.
The hand is to be restrained from the world,
No matter whether the sleeve be short or long.

Maxim 52

Regret will not leave the hearts of two persons and their feet of contention will not emerge from the mire: a merchant with a wrecked ship and a youth sitting with qalandars.

Dervishes will consider it licit to shed thy blood
If they can have no access to thy property.
Either associate not with a friend who dons the blue garb,
Or bid farewell to all thy property.
Either make no friends with elephant-keepers
Or build a house suitable for elephants.

Maxim 53

Although a sultan's garment of honour is dear yet one's own old robe is more dear; and though the food of a great man may be delicious, the broken crumbs of one's own sack are more delicious.

Vinegar by one's own labour and vegetables
Are better than bread received as alms, and veal.

Maxim 54

It is contrary to what is proper, and against the opinion of to partake of medicine by guess and to go after a caravan without seeing the road. The Imam Murshid Muhammad Ghazali, upon whom be the mercy of Allah, having been asked in what manner he had attained such a degree of knowledge, replied: 'By not being ashamed to ask about things I did not know.'

The hope of recovery is according to reason,
That he should feel thy pulse who knows thy nature.
Ask what thou knowest not; for the trouble of asking
Will indicate to thee the way to the dignity of knowledge.

Admonition 21

Whatever thou perceivest will become known to thee in due course of time. Make no haste in asking for it, else the awe of thy dignity will be lessened.

When Loqman saw that in the hands of David
All iron became by miracle soft like wax,
He asked not: 'What art thou doing?' Because
He knew he would learn it without asking.

Maxim 55

One of the requirements for society is to attend to the affairs of thy household and also at the house of God.

Tell thy tale according to thy hearer's temper,
If thou knowest him to be biased to thee.
Every wise man who sits with Mejnun
Speaks of nothing but the story of Laila's love.

Maxim 56

Anyone associating with bad people, although their nature may not infect his own, is supposed to follow their ways to such a degree that if he goes to a tavern to say his prayers, he will be supposed to do so for drinking wine.

Thou hast branded thyself with the mark of ignorance,
When thou hast selected an ignoramus for thy companion.
I asked some scholars for a piece of advice.
They said: 'Connect thyself not with an ignorant man,
For if thou be learned, thou wilt be an ass in course of time
And if unlearned thou wilt become a greater fool.'

Maxim 57

The meekness of the camel is known to be such that if a child takes hold of its bridle and goes a hundred farsakhs, it will not refuse to follow, but if a dangerous portion occurs which may occasion death and the child ignorantly desires to approach it, the camel tears the bridle from his hand, refusing any longer to obey because compliance in times of calamity is blamable. It is also said that by complaisance an enemy will not become a friend but that his greed will only be augmented.

To him who is kind to thee, be dust at his feet
But if he opposes thee fill his two eyes with dust.
Speak not kindly or gently to an ill-humoured fellow

Because a soft file cannot clean off inveterate rust.

Maxim 58

Who interrupts the conversation of others that they may know his excellence, they will become acquainted only with the degree of his folly.

An intelligent man will not give a reply
Unless he be asked a question.
Because though his words may be based on truth,
His claim to veracity may be deemed impossible.

Maxim 59

I had a wound under my robe and a sheikh asked me daily how, but not where it is, and I learned that he refrained because it is not admissible to mention every member; and wise men have also said that whoever does not ponder his question will be grieved by the answer.

Until thou knowest thy words to be perfectly suitable
Thou must not open thy mouth in speech.
If thou speakest truth and remainest in captivity,
It is better than that thy mendacity deliver thee therefrom.

Maxim 60

Mendacity resembles a violent blow, the scar of which remains, though the wound may be healed. Seest thou not how the brothers of Joseph became noted for falsehood, and no trust in their veracity remained, as Allah the most high has said: Nay but ye yourselves have contrived the thing for your own sake.

One habitually speaking the truth
Is pardoned when he once makes a slip
But if he becomes noted for lying,
People do not believe him even when speaking truth.

Maxim 61

The noblest of beings is evidently man, and the meanest a dog, but intelligent persons agree that a grateful dog is better than an ungrateful man.

A dog never forgets a morsel received
Though thou throwest a stone at him a hundred times.
But if thou cherishest a base fellow a lifetime,
He will for a trifle suddenly fight with thee.

Maxim 62

Who panders to his passions will not cultivate accomplishments and who possesses none is not suitable for a high position.

Have no mercy on a voracious ox
Who sleeps a great deal and eats much.
If thou wantest to have fatness like an ox,
Yield thy body to the tyranny of people like an ass.

Maxim 63

It is written in the Evangel: 'O son of Adam, if I give thee riches, thou wilt turn away from me with mundane cares, and if I make thee poor thou wilt sit down with a sad heart; then where wilt thou enjoy the sweetness of adoring me, and when wilt thou hasten to serve me?'

Sometimes thou art made haughty, and careless by wealth,
Sometimes art in distress from exhaustion and penury.
If thy state be such in joy and in distress,
I know not when thou wilt turn to God from thyself.

Maxim 64

The will of the Inscrutable brings down one from the royal throne, and protects the other in the belly of a fish.

Happy is the time of the man
Who spends it in adoring thee.

Maxim 65

When God draws the sword of wrath, prophets and saints draw in their heads, but if he casts a look of grace, he converts wicked into virtuous men.

If at the resurrection he addresses us in anger
What chance of pardon will even prophets have?
Say: 'Remove the veil from the face of mercy
Because sinners entertain hopes of pardon.'

Maxim 66

Whoever does not betake himself to the path of rectitude in consequence of the castigations of this world will fall under eternal punishment in the next. Allah the most high has said: And we will cause them to taste the nearer punishment of this world besides the more grievous punishment of the next.

Admonition is the address of superiors and then fetters.
If they give advice and thou listenest not, they put thee in
fetters.

Maxim 67

Fortunate men are admonished by the adventures and similes of those who have preceded them, before those who follow them can use the event as a proverb, like thieves who shorten their hands, lest their hands be cut off.

The bird does not go to the grain displayed
When it beholds another fowl in the trap.
Take advice by the misfortunes of others
That others may not take advice from thee.

Maxim 68

How can he hear whose organ of audition has been created dull, and how can he avoid progressing upon whom the noose of happiness has been flung?

To the friends of God a dark night
Shines like the brilliant day.
This felicity is not by strength of arm
Unless God the giver bestows it.

To whom shall I complain of thee? There is no other judge
And there is no other hand superior to thine.
Whom thou guidest -no one can lead astray.
Whom thou castest off no one can guide.

Maxim 69

The earth receives showers from heaven and gives to it only dust. Every vessel exudes what it contains.

If my humour appears to thee unbecoming
Lose not thy own good humour.

Maxim 70

A mendicant with a good end is better than a padshah with a bad end.

The grief thou sufferest before the joy
Is better than the grief endured after joy.

Maxim 71

The Most High sees a fault and conceals it, and a neighbour sees it not, but shouts.

Let us take refuge with Allah.
If people knew our faults
No one could have rest from interference by others.

Maxim 72

Gold is obtained from a mine by digging it, but from a miser by digging the soul.

Vile men spend not, but preserve.
They say hope of spending is better than spending.
One day thou seest the wish of the foe fulfilled
The gold remaining and the vile man dead.

Maxim 73

Who has no mercy upon inferiors will suffer from the tyranny of superiors.

Not every arm which contains strength
Breaks the hand of the weak for showing bravery.
Injure not the heart of the helpless
For thou wilt succumb to the force of a strong man.

Maxim 74

When a wise man encounters obstacles, he leaps away and casts anchor at the proper opportunity, for thus he will be in the former instance safe on shore, and in the latter he will enjoy himself.

Maxim 75

The gambler requires three sixes and only three aces turn up.

The pasture is a thousand times more pleasant than the racecourse
But the steed has not the bridle at its option.

Story 1

A dervish prayed thus: 'O Lord, have mercy upon the wicked, because thou hast already had mercy upon good men by creating them to be good.'

Maxim 76

The first sovereign who laid stress on costume and wore rings on his left hand was Jamshid; and being asked why he had adorned his left whereas excellence resides in the right hand, he replied: 'The right hand is fully ornamented by its own rectitude.'

Feridun ordered Chinese embroiderers
To write around the borders of his tent:
'Keep the wicked well, O intelligent man,
Because the good are in themselves great and fortunate.'

Story 2

A great man having been asked why he wore his seal-ring on his left hand, whereas the right possesses so much excellence, replied: 'Knowest thou not that the meritorious are always neglected?'

He who has created joy and distress
Apportions either excellence or luck.

Maxim 77

He may freely warn who neither fears to lose his life nor hopes for gold.

Pour either gold at the feet of a monotheist
Or place an Indian sabre to his head.
He entertains no hope nor fear from anyone
And this is a sufficient basis of monotheism.

Maxim 78

The padshah is to remove oppressors; the police, murderers; and the qazi to hear complaints about thieves; but two enemies willing to agree to what is right will not apply to him.

When thou seest that it must be given what is right
Pay it rather with grace than fighting and distressed.
If a man pays not his tax of his own accord
The officer's man will take it by force.

Maxim 79

The teeth of all men are blunted by sourness, but those of the qazi by sweetness.

The qazi whom thou bribest with five cucumbers
Will prove that ten melon-fields are due to thee.

Maxim 80

What can an old prostitute do but vow to become chaste, and an policeman not to commit oppression upon men?

A youth who sits in a corner is a hero in the path of God
Because an old man is unable to rise from his corner.

A youth must be strong minded to abstain from lust,
Because even the sexual tool of an old man, of sluggish desire,
rises not.

Maxim 81

A sage was asked: 'Of so many notable, high and fertile trees which God the most high has created, not one is called free, except the cypress, which bears no fruit. What is the reason of this?' He replied: 'Every tree has its appropriate season of fruit, so that it is sometimes flourishing therewith, and looks sometimes withered by its absence; with the cypress, however, neither is the case, it being fresh at all times, and this is the quality of those who are free.'

Place not thy heart on what passes away; for the Tigris
Will flow after the Khalifs have passed away in Baghdad.
If thou art able, be liberal like the date tree,
And if thy hand cannot afford it, be liberal like the cypress.

Maxim 82

Two men died, bearing away their grief One had possessed wealth and not enjoyed it, the other knowledge and not practised it.

No one sees an excellent but avaricious man
Without publishing his defect
But if a liberal man has a hundred faults
His generosity covers his imperfections.

Conclusion of the Book

The book of the Gulistan has been completed, and Allah had been invoked for aid! By the grace of the Almighty, may his name be honoured, throughout the work the custom of authors to insert verses from ancient writers by way of loan, has not been followed.

To adorn oneself with one's own rag
Is better than to ask for the loan of a robe.

Most of the utterances of Sa'di being exhilarant and mixed with pleasantry, shortsighted persons have on this account lengthened the tongue of blame, alleging that it is not the part of intelligent men to spend in vain the kernel of their brain, and to eat without profit the smoke of the lamp; it is, however, not concealed from enlightened men, who are able to discern the tendency of words, that pearls of curative admonition are strung upon the thread of explanation, and that the bitter medicine of advice is commingled with the honey of wit, in order that the reader's mind should not be fatigued, and thereby excluded from the benefit of acceptance; and praise be to the Lord of both worlds.

We gave advice in its proper place
Spending a lifetime in the task.
If it should not touch anyone's ear of desire
The messenger told his tale; it is enough.

O thou who lookest into it, ask Allah to have mercy
On the author and to pardon the owner of it.
Ask for thyself whatever benefit thou mayest desire,
And after that pardon for the writer of it.
If I had on the day of resurrection an opportunity
Near the Compassionate one I should say: 'O Lord,
I am the sinner and thou the beneficent master,
For all the ill I have done I crave for thy bounty.'

Gratitude is due from me to God that this book is ended Before my life has reached its termination.

THE END